Daily Report

Latin America

FBIS-LAT-92-245
Monday
21 December 1992

Daily Report
Latin America

FBIS-LAT-92-245 *21 December 1992*

CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An • indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Jamaica 'More Sanguine' on EC Banana Deal *[CANA]* 1

CARIBBEAN

Cuba

Fidel Castro Gives Speech at Spare Parts Forum *[Havana Radio]* 2
Raul Castro and Entourage Tour Pinar del Rio City *[Havana TV]* 11
• Material Incentives for Sugar Workers Reported *[TRABAJADORES 30 Nov]* 12
Havana Notes NAFTA Disadvantages for Mexico *[Havana Radio]* 12
Delegation Meets Chinese Minister; Signs Agreement *[Havana Radio]* 13
Air Force Defector Flies Family Back to Florida *[Madrid EFE]* 13

Haiti

Police Head Forbids Pro-Aristide Committee March *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 13
Pro-Aristide Commission Protests Ban *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 14
Dismissed Educators Ask Students To Support Autonomy *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 14

MEXICO

Ambassador To U.S. Comments on NAFTA, Clinton *[NOTIMEX]* 15

CENTRAL AMERICA

Belize

Police Kill 'Reputed Terrorist' To Rescue Diplomat *[CANA]* 16

El Salvador

Armed Forces Demobilize Counterterrorist Battalions *[LA PRENSA GRAFICA 17 Dec]* 16
Vargas Announces Army Resumes Normal Activities *[San Salvador Radio]* 16
Purged Army Officers Not To Be Revealed *[DIARIO LATINO 16 Dec]* 16
Military Chiefs Reiterate High Morale in Army *[EL DIARIO DE HOY 17 Dec]* 17

Honduras

Armed Forces Restructure High Command *[ACAN]* 18

Nicaragua

H. Ortega on Sandinist Jarquin's Call for Resignation *[BARRICADA 19 Dec]* 18
Japanese Prime Minister Announces Donations *[LA PRENSA 16 Dec]* 18
Italian Government Donates $1.7 Million *[Managua Radio]* 19

Panama

Marchers Commemorate 20 Dec Invasion Anniversary *[ACAN]* 19
Presidential Palace Guards Note Bomb Scare *[ACAN]* 19

Article Calls For Reflection on U.S. Invasion *[LA PRENSA 20 Dec]* 20
M-20 Announces 'Legitimate Armed Struggle' *[EL PANAMA AMERICA 19 Dec]* 20
U.S. Implication in Arias Resignation Suggested *[LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA 20 Dec]* 20
Official Notes Losses Caused by Banana Quotas *[EL SIGLO 19 Dec]* 21
Free Zone Manager Denies Money Laundering Charge *[LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA 19 Dec]* ... 21

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina

Interior Minister on Meeting With U.S. Ambassador *[LA PRENSA 20 Dec]* 22
Government Confirms Sale of Planes to Sri Lanka *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 22
French Mission Seeks Atomic Energy Agreements *[TELAM]* 22
New Air Force General Staff Coordinator Installed *[PAGINA/12, 10 Dec]* 22
Military Chiefs of Staff Request Salary Increase *[CLARIN 18 Dec]* 23
European-Brazilian Consortium Wins Satellite Bid *[BUENOS AIRES HERALD 17 Dec]* 23
Uranium Deposit Discovered in Chubut Province *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 23
Poll Shows Decline in Menem's Image in Last Year *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 23
Julio Miranda Elected Tucuman National Senator *[BUENOS AIRES HERALD 17 Dec]* 23
San Juan Province Governor Relieved of Duties *[BUENOS AIRES HERALD 19 Dec]* 24

Bolivia

Cuban Military Officers and Professionals Visit *[LA RAZON 10 Dec]* 24
Meet Paz Zamora at Government Palace *[LA RAZON 10 Dec]* 24
Ossio, Others on Extradition Treaty With U.S. *[La Paz TV]* 25

Brazil

President Franco Denies Cabinet Reshuffle Plans *[Brasilia Radio]* 25
Minister Returns From Meetings With Clinton Team *[O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO 18 Dec]* 26
Haddad's Days in Government Possibly Numbered *[FOLHA DE SAO PAULO 17 Dec]* 26
Franco Plans To Merge Planning, Finance Ministries *[O GLOBO 19 Dec]* 26
Congress To Vote on Fiscal Adjustment in January *[FOLHA DE SAO PAULO 17 Dec]* 27
Senator Sees Collor's Chances To Return Improving *[O GLOBO 19 Dec]* 27
Poll Shows 60 Percent Trust President Franco *[Brasilia Radio]* 28

Chile

Interior Minister Krauss Criticizes Argentine Tax *[Santiago TV]* 28
Foreign Minister Signs Agreements With Jamaica *[EL MERCURIO 5 Dec]* 28
Pinochet Defends Military Courts Against Criticism *[Santiago Radio]* 29
Admits Officers Involved in Phone Tapping *[Santiago Radio]* 29
Previous Remarks Misinterpreted *[Santiago TV]* 29
Justices Charged With Violating Constitution *[Santiago Radio]* 30
Interview With Deputy Matthei on RN Party Ruling *[Santiago Radio]* 30

Colombia

Cartel Chief Escobar To Surrender 'Any Time' *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 31
Government Denies 'Rumors' *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 31
Car Bomb Kills Medellin Police Commander *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 31
Police Report Bomb Attack at Cali Hotel *[Hamburg DPA]* 31
Escobar Associates Rebel at Maximum Security Prison *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 32
DAS Director Says Guerrillas Protecting Escobar *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 32
ELN Leader Transferred to New Prison in Bogota *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 32
Army, FARC Engage in 'Heavy Combat' in Meta *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 33
Police Rescue Kidnapped U.S. Child *[Madrid EFE]* 33

Ecuador

Peruvian President Fujimori Arrives for Visit *[Quito Radio]* 33
Defense Minister Denies Weapons Came From Ecuador *[Quito Radio]* 33
Congress Passes Bill Reorganizing Justice System *[Quito Radio]* 33

Paraguay

President Reviews 1992 Political, Economic Accomplishments *[HOY 18 Dec]* 34
Poll Shows Growing Support for National Encounter *[TIEMPO 16 Dec]* 34

Peru

Gunmen Kill Labor Leader Following 17 Dec Protests *[NOTIMEX]* 35
President Accuses Shining Path *[Lima Radio]* 35
National Election Board Announces CCD Winners *[Lima TV]* 35
Legislature Reopens To Install New Congress *[NOTIMEX]* 36
Government Extends State of Emergency for 60 Days *[AFP]* 36
Officer Linked to Coup Attempt Travels to Chile *[AFP]* 36
Fujimori Returns to Lima After Visiting Ecuador *[Lima TV]* 36
Minister on Five-Point Economic Recovery Program *[EL PERUANO 6 Dec]* 36
Government Creates Private Pension System *[EL PERUANO 7 Dec]* 37
Government Promulgates Energy, Mining Law *[Lima Radio]* 37
• Composition, Agenda of New Congress Discussed 38
• Parties 'Regrouping' *[EL COMERCIO 23 Nov]* 38
• Legislators Discuss Plans *[EL COMERCIO 23 Nov]* 39

Uruguay

Foreign Minister Resigns, Two Ministers To Follow *[Madrid EFE]* 40
Minister Says Economic Policy To Be Maintained *[Madrid EFE]* 41
Government Not To Use Third Part of IMF Loan *[Montevideo Radio]* 41

Venezuela

Commission Restores Right To Demonstrate, Other Measures *[Caracas TV]* 41
President Perez Praises Armed Forces *[Caracas TV]* 42
Minister Denies Colombian Guerillas Crossing Border *[Caracas TV]* 42

Jamaica 'More Sanguine' on EC Banana Deal

FL2112011892 Bridgetown CANA in English 1521 GMT 20 Dec 92

[By Paget DeFreitas]

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, Dec 20, CANA—Jamaica appeared more sanguine than in the past about Europe's formula for restructuring its banana market, but said that it would consult with its Caribbean Community (Caricom) partners before deciding the region's interests were protected by the policy agreed to this week by EC farm ministers. The EC has been re-organising its segmented banana market ahead of the start-up of a single market that comes into effect in January.

Kingston's position appeared far more tentative than the satisfaction expressed by the Windward Islands, through St. Lucia's prime minister, John Compton, that their traditional banana markets, under threat from Latin America, will be preserved.

"Over the next few days we will be in consultation with our Caricom partners in the Windward Islands and our banana producers here and in the U.K. To determine whether (the EC proposals) go far enough and what further action, if any, we may need to take to protect our vital interests in this matter," the foreign trade minister, David Coore, said in a statement here. However, government technocrats here suggest that the agreement is workable and went further than they initially feared in protecting the traditional markets.

"On the face of it we might be able to live with this deal," one foreign trade official told CANA. "Once the package is refined, we will see a clearer picture, but the outlines seem to have possibilities."

Under minister's traffication formula, Latin American exporters of the so-called 'dollar banana', have been given a quota of two million tonnes a year to the EC (European Community) which will attract a tariff of 100 ECU (European Currency Unit). Imports above the quota will attract a tariff of 850 ECU a tonne. The quota to Latin America is about 500,000 tonnes below their recent annual exports to the market and virtually ensures that Caribbean exporters can maintain their market share.

Beyond that, the agreement also contemplates a partnership arrangement what would require traditional importers of dollar bananas and fruit from the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries to mix their purchases. This should help to even out prices between cheap Latin American producers, where multinationals operate on large mechanised plantations, and the more expensive small island producers. There will also be a trigger for higher punitive tariffs against Latin American fruit if traditional suppliers are hurt by 'dollar' fruit.

The ACP countries, which are linked to the European Community in a trade pact, enjoy preferential access to traditional markets under their Lome Convention. EC banana producers such as France, with its overseas departments, also benefitted from the approach in Europe's previously variegated market.

Although the banana protocol in the Lome Agreement, signed less than two years ago, committed the EC to find a formula that placed ACP producers in a position less favourable than the past, Germany, the Community's biggest banana importer, argued strongly for liberalisation of the market. It said the formula could push up prices to its consumers. But Britain, committed to its former colonies in the Caribbean, and France, with its departments of Martinique and Guadeloupe, and its ties to former colonies in Africa and the Pacific, led the opposition to a free trade regime.

Coore in his statement stressed the importance of bananas to Caribbean economies and the need to maintain the region's market.

"It is impossible to overstate how important it is for the future of the Caribbean banana industry that the protection afforded by the Lome Convention should be substantially maintained," the Jamaican minister said.

Cuba

Fidel Castro Gives Speech at Spare Parts Forum

FL1912023092 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2230 GMT 17 Dec 92

[Speech by Cuban President Fidel Castro at the closing session of the Seventh National Spare Parts, Equipment, and Advanced Technologies Forum at the Havana Convention Center on 16 December—recorded]

[Text] [Castro] Comrades, participants in the Seventh Forum: It has been truly moving to be able to give, in this simple but moving ceremony, the certificates and awards which approximately 30 comrades have received here on behalf of groups or individuals. I know that there was a previous award presentation, because I believe that there were 109 significant or outstanding .... [pauses] One hundred and I do not how many. How many? One hundred and six significant [entries]. What comes after that? The outstanding ones. [unidentified speaker: "One hundred and thirty-three outstanding ones."] What is the difference? You came up with this, right? There were, however, 99 special mentions and 245 mentions. What is the total? Do you know? One certificate was missing. No, I mean of the ones we have just presented. Was it 30? Thirty-four.

While these sessions were held .... [pauses] and they turned out to be marathon sessions, because this is a new style. I would say that it is the style of the contingents, since the sessions lasted 13 or 14 hours, in addition to the 13 or 14 hours you spent in the meetings of the commissions the previous day. I reflected on the meaning of this meeting, this forum. I believe that it suggests many things. First of all, there is a climate of great seriousness and enthusiasm, but an enthusiasm that arises from the conviction, the awareness, of the vital and decisive importance of the work you are doing. It is an enthusiasm that arises from the satisfaction of fulfilling your duty. I noticed this in everyone who walked by this podium, in the truly deep happiness, the satisfaction of each and every individual who received an award. I believe that they have good reason for this. This collective recognition by the people and the nation at this difficult time implies extraordinary merit. I believe that each one of them, and each and every one of you, have experienced moments of great emotion and satisfaction.

I believe that this event reflects a success, not a common success but a huge success. I was trying to remember every one of the previous events since the beginning of the forums. It began as the Spare Parts Forum. Later the concept was expanded and enriched. I believe that the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR] were not included at the beginning. They were included later. You were in from the beginning, but not in such large numbers as today, right? That is right. Mainly, the members of the National Association of Innovators and Efficiency Experts [ANIR] were the first to participate in the forums.

When did the members of the Technical Youth Brigades [BTJ] first participate? [unidentified speaker: "In the Second Forum."] In the Second Forum. It has been growing. First, we had the ANIR members, then the members of the BTJ began joining. In the end, we still had many sectors missing. A whole sector was absent: the scientific sector, where we had tens of thousands of highly trained workers. So during the Sixth Forum, the idea arose to start including the workers of the science sector. Now we have all of them. We have all the civilian scientific and technical activities represented by the ANIR, the BTJ, and the science sector, as well as the FAR and the Ministry of the Interior.

This has enriched the forums extraordinarily. However, that has not been all. In addition to the forums, we have the scientific forums .... [pauses] or the scientific hubs, which is what we call them. We have the scientific hubs. They have been organized throughout this year since the Sixth Forum. However, in addition to this, we have the [science workers] unions, which have also been created throughout the year. Therefore, we now have the forums, hubs, and unions. These are three highly integrating factors which are also all united. I believe that this effort has been reflected in this event, in the quality of this event, in the extremely high level of integration which has been observed in this event, the solidarity and cooperation. This is now also being reflected, and we are really just beginning.

This is first forum where we can reap the results of all these integrating efforts. I noticed when many of you spoke about the plan for next year's forum. I also believe that the idea of holding the forum every year was something that is very good and very well suited to the special period.

It is curious that you are already beginning to think about next year's forum. I believe that any honest, objective individual who might have been able to see how this event was conducted would be truly amazed by what we have seen here.

I have tried to be present throughout the whole plenary meeting, but I can only imagine what might have been discussed in the commissions. No one could have attended 11 commissions, but I remember that when the union was organized I participated in several commissions. At those commission meetings I saw things of great interest which did not appear in the plenary meeting. During the plenum, the discussion was more general. Therefore, I can only imagine the enormous richness of content which existed in the commission meetings. I called several comrades. I talked with them. I asked for their opinions. They were truly amazed by the results of the commission meetings. We can not deduce what this process has been simply by participating in the plenary meetings. We have to figure out how to convey

what can and should be conveyed to all the participants or the largest possible number of people regarding the content of the commission meetings. I repeat: The things discussed here were really very general, although extremely important.

There were a number of discussions on food program issues. What has been discussed here in comparison to the vast number of projects and solutions which have been submitted regarding the food program? We discussed biotechnology, the pharmaceutical industry, and health. What , however, has been discussed here compared to all the work conducted in this field, or in the energy, services, or defense fields?

I am only trying to imagine how many things can be derived from the sole fact that 34,000 proposals were presented in 1991, and on this occasion there were approximately 65,000 proposals. Compared to the approximately 40,000 solutions of last year, this year 78,896 were submitted, if I remember correctly. It is truly impressive. I would dare to say that a movement of this character and nature has never been developed anywhere else. This represents true potential for Cuba, for its present and its future.

If we analyze how we worked before, or how it is done in the capitalist world, each institution has its own concerns. Every factory, every scientific and technical center, every research center, every hospital works alone. They have absolutely nothing to do with one another. Here we witness the spectacle of tens of thousands, and not only tens of thousands, but hundreds of thousands of science and technology workers, innovators, and efficiency experts cooperating among themselves. You have no idea of the value of the cooperative, sincere, selfless, and enthusiastic effort of hundreds of thousands of minds and wills. This is what we have seen here.

There are 270,000 ANIR members alone. I asked and was told that there are approximately 130,000 BTJ members. That makes 400,000. Add to this the tens of thousands of science workers, the tens of thousands of hospital workers and doctors who in one way or another cooperate in this type of activity. Add to this the students, the university students, the secondary-school students, and even the Pioneers who participate. This totals over 500,000 people participating in this movement. How much can 500,000 minds accomplish when they work together? This is the great merit, the great feat of the forum. This is not seen anywhere else.

This is why I believe that this movement has so much potential for Cuba. I must also add that this is cause for pride for all of us, those who are younger and those who are older, and those of us who have experienced all these years of the revolution from the days of the literacy campaign to the present. We see here a solid, concrete achievement of more than 30 years of revolution. We are far from saying that the available human and intellectual resources, the few we had at the beginning, have been used in the most optimum manner. I believe, however, that we are learning to take maximum advantage of all these resources, now when we have the most resources in this field.

Who today can talk about or even remember illiteracy? It is true that everything was done at its proper time. The great literacy campaign was one of the great successes of this revolution, and this revolution was the first to be able to conduct a massive campaign on that scale. Later, other countries tried to copy it based on the experience of the Cuban revolution. I do not believe that any other country has carried this to such a high degree as Cuba. This effort now, these hundreds of thousands of workers and technicians, innovators and efficiency experts, the participants in this giant movement, are the result of those campaigns that began with the literacy program.

This is reason to feel proud. I ask myself and I ask you if you can think of any other country, any other place where a phenomenon such as this one has taken place. I say this, knowing many of the people here as well as I do, and knowing as well as I do, what they represent. When the country did not have anything, it confronted difficult situations during the initial years, when all the spare parts disappeared for the trucks, vehicles, and equipment we had then, which were a lot fewer than now, and also for the factories we had. When the brutal embargo began, and we did not have what we have today, the country was able to keep that equipment going because we had the will. Back then we did not even have lathes. You can imagine how many parts were made by hand in those early years of the revolution in order to keep the textile industry, a truck, a tractor, a piece of industrial equipment, going.

Now, history has repeated itself but in a worse fashion. Because then, at least, when we had shortages of raw materials, parts, and equipment, other opportunities arose, opportunities that do not exist today. Other opportunities arose to obtain raw materials, food, parts, equipment, and other things. These opportunities do not exist today at all. In the same way, when fuel became scarce, other sources arose for obtaining fuel. Although the price of sugar was not very high, the prices of other products were not so high either. As I have said so many times—and I will have to repeat it many more times—with one ton of sugar you could buy eight tons of oil, and today, because oil is sold at monopoly prices, with one ton of sugar you can buy approximately 1.4 tons of oil. It can go higher or lower.

These circumstances contribute to shaping the characteristics of the special period. It is difficult and hard. We are aware of this. If it were not difficult and hard, what we are doing would not earn any merit. During easy times, anybody can do anything. During easy times, anyone could be a revolutionary. Today, only those who are true people, true patriots, and true revolutionaries behave as patriots and revolutionaries in truly difficult times. For this reason, if we ask ourselves what we had then, we had the embargo on the one hand but we had

other things to confront the embargo with, other opportunities, other alternatives. Today, we do not have those alternatives to confront the embargo. This is why we speak of a double embargo, because in reality, a double embargo has taken effect.

The price of one ton of sugar has dropped from about $800 to $200. We have to seek new markets because the old markets have practically disappeared. What we sell to those markets is very little and it takes a lot of work. The prices are very low, very marginal. It is natural for us to talk about a double embargo. Today, it is difficult to buy spare parts because no one even sells them. We also have to pay for them with the sugar or other products which we need to buy fuel from different sources, or we pay with nickel, tobacco, citrus, or other crops, other products, or tourism, or biotechnology products. Nowadays, we are paying by means of a rigorous distribution of the funds we have, cent by cent, in order of priority. We are doing this in the midst of the imperialist embargo, which has not yielded for a single second, but which to the contrary has become more intense and brutal, harrassing all our economic and trade operations one by one in an attempt to thwart our efforts one by one. We truly have to speak of a double embargo.

In other words, we do not have the things now that we had then. What do we have now that we did not have then? We have you. [applause] We have never before—nor has anyone else, anywhere—had what we have seen here. What we have here is what we are counting on. The revolution is behind you, the people are behind you. The heroism, the high awareness, the high revolutionary spirit of our people are behind you. This is what it is all about. We have to get our own resources. No one is going to give them to us for free. No one is going to change the world overnight. We must find our own resources in a world which is truly much more difficult. I would say that it is a more difficult world than ever.

We have only to analyze the international scene to see that it is a more difficult world than ever, and that it is under a power that has never been so strong. It is under the hegemony of a power that is stronger than ever, the power of the empire. The influence of the empire has never been so powerful.

All you have to do is see what it does at the United Nations, what it has turned the whole Security Council into, to justify and even support any adventure in any part of the world under different pretexts, even the pretext of famine. Imperialism is responsible for this famine. This famine is a consequence of colonialism and neocolonialism. This famine has resulted from the exploitation of the peoples. Now they want to solve the hunger problem with guns. Today it is one country, but tomorrow it could be another and another. Tomorrow it could be all of Africa. It is a fact that in Africa the droughts are becoming more severe, the deserts are expanding, the population is increasing, the diseases and poverty are multiplying. How can imperialism think it can solve the problems of this era with guns? One day they would have to invade the whole world to find solutions for these problems.

Never has the world experienced a period of this kind, this nature. The peoples are reacting. They are reacting to the extent possible, and they will react. They will react, because they cannot accept this. They cannot resign themselves to this. There in the United Nations, of course, all of the 15 members of the Security Council, without exception, voted for this intervention there because the criterion, the pretext was strong. There were the pictures of the skeletal people and the people dying of hunger. The aircraft carriers, armored units, helicopters, tanks, and everything have arrived there, along with the boots, which were seen in some pictures, the boots on the backs of some Somalis. So they went over there to deliver food by force of arms. They went there with force of arms to deliver food. In another part of the world they have imposed an embargo on a country like Cuba, in an attempt to make it die of hunger and poverty. There you have the empire's logic and morality! However, of the 15 countries that approved it—the United States and the other 14—at least 14 warned that it was an exceptional case. The only country that did not say anything about this being exceptional, but rather, spoke of it as something ordinary was the United States itself.

So a number of very serious problems have been accumulating in the world. The statistics from everywhere point to situations that are truly catastrophic, and not only in Africa, but also in Latin America and in a large part of the countries of the Third World. There are voices that are being raised to protest the fact that harvests are being destroyed while the world is going hungry, while hundreds of millions of people, while more than 1 billion human beings are going hungry. What we can ask ourselves is whether capitalism is able to solve this problem, if the disease can become the medicine, if the same bacteria that have caused all these catastrophes, all these unhealthy situations in the world, are going to bring health to the world.

It was capitalism that led to colonialism, slavery, underdevelopment, poverty, and hunger. It led to the lack of elemental resources for the population. I mean economic resources, but natural resources too, because capitalism is destroying the planet's natural resources. It is destroying them with its consumer societies, with its incredible wastefulness. We wonder if it is indeed capitalism that is going to come and solve these problems.

That is why I was saying that we are living in a truly difficult world. It has been proven, however, that our people have the mettle to confront such a truly difficult world. Our people have the necessary mettle. Who would have thought that our people would one day defy the empire? Yet they did. Who would have thought that the Revolution would be able to last for 30 years? Yet it has. Of course, circumstances helped a lot, when the socialist bloc appeared. However, when Cuba defied the empire .... [pauses] The empire was defied when we decided to make justice prevail in our country, when we decided to

do away with all those disgraceful ways of life, all the forms of discrimination, abuse, injustice, and humiliation for our people, who could not even go to the beaches. They did not have jobs, education, health care, consideration, or anything. They suffered from racial and sexual discrimination.

To put an end to all that we had to defy the empire. We really had to expropriate the exploiters, which was what the revolution did, and give everything to the people, from the land to the houses, schools, hospitals, natural wealth, everything. We had to recover it to put it into the people's hand. This was a great challenge to the empire. The empire began to conspire and try to destroy the revolution as soon as the agrarian reform was done.

This was just because of the agrarian reform, long before the nationalizations. When the revolution defied the empire, it did so at its own risk. No one was counting on the existence of the socialist bloc. The socialist bloc was there, and it was lucky that it was there, but we followed the traditions of our history, our nation. In 1868 as well, when the Cubans rose up in arms, they did so at their own risk. When they again rose up in arms in 1895, they did so at their own risk. Of course, the empire was there, nascent, and it took over Cuba. Then it left Cuba in liberty on paper, and we know what that republic was. Everyone knows. Revolutionaries know that there was absolutely no independence and that we were the property of the imperialists. They let us play the national anthem from time to time and raise the flag, but every so often there was an armed intervention here. When there were protest movements, unrest, or uprisings, they immediately intervened.

However, when we, also in our time, creaed the revolution, the empire was very powerful, almost omnipotent. Nevertheless, our people did not hesitate to defy the empire. Now, when the socialist bloc has collapsed, our people have been capable of defying imperialism and the collapse, both things. Well, only a nation that really has mettle, traditions of struggle, and very high awareness and values is capable of doing this. This is another reason we should feel proud. So this world with all its difficulties does not scare us. Nor do these times with all their difficulties. We have already faced very great challenges when we did not have anything, when we were not what we are today, when we did not have the minds we have today, when we did not have the talents we have today.

We have not only outstanding talents, not only very valuable talents, but also aware, cooperating, patriotic, young revolutionaries. When I asked today who would take PPG, I saw that very few raised their hands, in spite of the fact that I recommended it as a preventive medicine. However, I look at you, and see that we really have a mass of young technicians and scientists who have practically their whole lives ahead of them. We have these wonderful resources today to defy this difficult world, this uncertain world. When faced with difficulties, one learns a lot.

Today we realize that when the resources were abundant, they still seemed insufficient to us. There were years when in our discussions with the Soviets we had to say: No, do not send us so many tractors. The list had already reached 4,000 or 4,500, and I said: There are too many tractors here. It was a shame that we could not exchange the tractors for other things. We sometimes needed another type of equipment and we could not exchange the tractors for another type of equipment or another type of product. We could not do that, although there were times when we had too much equipment.

There were times when there was more than enough fuel. We even had a fuel surplus, when we had gotten reasonable, fair prices for our sugar. We had a trade ratio of one to seven, approximately, tons of sugar for tons of oil. It was not better than it had been in 1959. It was a little worse, but quite similar. There were times when the country reexported fuel every year, for hundreds of millions of dollars. This was in addition to a high level of consumption because of so many tractors and trucks.

Who would have been able to achieve today's austerity or conservation with that abundance of fuel and equipment? I remember this because I saw it many times on the highway and I suffered for it, because the tractors were out on Saturdays and Sundays, pulling wagons full of people to go to soccer games. People took out a tractor for any little thing. The country had about 80,000 tractors, if I remember correctly. It cannot be much different from that figure. In some cases we had wasteful trucks, because everyone knows that a ZIL-130 needs its own refinery to follow along behind it, its own fuel tanker to follow along behind it. However, the ZIL-130 trucks came and then the fuel tankers came, and there were no other trucks, so we had to work with the ZIL-130's. Then we had the ZIL-130's but not the fuel tankers. We had trucks of all kinds, but we got spare parts as well. We got tens or hundreds of millions of pesos' worth of spare parts.

How, if not in a special period, would we really learn to conserve and do what we are doing? This does not mean that we are conserving 100 percent yet. Every time I see some vehicle out, I wonder what it is doing. If I tour the countryside and I see a tractor, I wonder what it is doing, or the vehicles that pass on the streets. We must keep in mind—and it is painful and I was recalling it here—how much money we must pay for what little fuel we have today.

When we talked about possible exports of albumins for $3 million, I thought that $3 million is almost what we must spend for fuel every day. This example gives an idea of the size of the effort we must make. We would have to have 300 times the exports to cover the cost of the fuel we need each year, in spite of the enormous number of trucks out of service, buses out of service, and all those things. This example, however, gives an idea of the effort, the conservation, that is demanded.

Today we discussed here whether we have acted quickly enough concerning energy conservation. It became obvious here today that (?except for) the electricity plants that have their proper measuring equipment to verify the consumption—there is some automated equipment, even though it sometimes lacks components—we have more than 3,500 boilers—I think that was the total—more than 3,500 boilers that still do not have any of those monitoring mechanisms. The sensors have been developed. The equipment has been developed to monitor those boilers more efficiently, in the sugar mills and all those facilities that use boilers.

So we are still wasting energy. There are still sugar refineries that consume power from the national network. There are still turbogenerators that arrived in other times and have not yet been assembled. There are enough turbogenerators to bring the number up to 42. They have been here for years. Well, I think all those turbogenerators should already be assembled right now. When you know that the country is spending more than 40 percent of its export earnings on fuel, and in addition has to import food, medicine, raw materials, and an endless number of things, tires or raw materials for tires, batteries or raw materials for batteries, how can we have 42 turbogenerators still not all assembled?

How can we have boilers that still do not have the basic equipment to monitor the boilers and conserve 3, 4, 5, or 10 percent of the fuel or bagasse? It is because bagasse is oil. If we do not use bagasse well at the sugar refineries, they must bring in electricity from the national network. If we use it well, we reduce the need for electricity at the sugar refinery or complex. The refinery can even provide electricity to the national network. The example of the comrade from the [name indistinct] Refinery, I think, is really impressive. We gave that comrade a certificate. He repaired .... [pauses] In the seventies there were some surplus turbogenerators. Probably two Soviet or East German turbogenerators had arrived there, were assembled right away, and the existing ones taken out. He repaired the latter and even though they are 70 years old, that refinery is self-sufficient in electricity and provides power to the national electricity network. There is an example for you of what can be done. There is an example for you of what needs to be done in the special period.

It is, however, even worse to have 42 that have not yet been assembled. We cannot have a program of so many in 1991, so many in 1992, so many in 1993, and so many in 1994. If you have 42 turbogenerators, and 20 or whatever still need to be assembled, you have to assemble them all in 1993, before the next sugar harvest. There is nothing else to be done. There is no alternative, when we are using almost $3 million worth of fuel per day, so that the hospitals, schools, cities, research centers, and factories will not come to a halt; so that there can be some electricity for the households. I think that one of the conclusions of this forum is that as quickly as possible, we must acquire or make all the instruments we need for those more than 3,500 boilers that are operating in this country. As quickly as possible. [repeats]

I think that as quickly as possible, to the extent the availability of steel or other necessary materials permit, we must do what the Construction Ministry did, and next year not give any prize to those who are using fuel/water emulsion because everyone will be using it. Of course, there is a limiting factor, which was mentioned here, of the surfactants. However, you also spoke about the possibility of producing them through biotechnology. I remember well that [words indistinct] made a visit to INIFAT [Institute for Basic Research in Tropical Agriculture] and they talked to me about azotobacter, which can be used on the rice crop. At that time they began to produce azotobacter in one of the fermenters that was not being used, in Santa Cruz del Norte. Not more than two weeks went by, or if I remember correctly not even three weeks went by from the time we had the news and the INIFAT people told us about azotobacter, that it could supply some of the nitrogen the rice crop needs, and they were already producing it on a large scale. In 21 days! That is the style we must apply. Azotobacter has been applied to almost the entire rice crop. Of course, azotobacter does not supply all the nitrogen needed by the rice, but it does supply a considerable part.

Azotobacter has been applied to thousands of caballerias. I remember another example that was talked about for the first time. This is interferon. The first time I heard about interferon was from an American doctor who visited Cuba, and when he was asked about the most recent things, the most recent hopes, he mentioned interferon as a possible medicine to cure cancer. He invited two doctors to go there. We sent two, and there we found out who had developed the technology in Finland. They told us to send two doctors and we sent six. However, from the time when we heard about interferon to the time we produced interferon, I do not think more than three months went by, or maybe four months. Not even four months had gone by, and we were producing interferon in Cuba.

I think this was in 1981. What year was it, [Manuel] Limonta? It was in 1980. [Limonta: "It was in 1981."] In a few weeks we did .... [pauses] First, a building was adapted. Then the first center was built. That was the birth of biotechnology in Cuba, we might say. With the strength it has today, it was born in 1981, from just the information that a product called interferon existed. There was a lot of hope placed in it at that time. Since then, interferon has been used for many things, and for some kinds of cancer, but it was not a universal remedy for cancer.

That is the style we have to work in. At that time we were not really in a special period. We have spent all of 1992 studying (?asospirilum), because up to now, we have not found a kind of azotobacter that can help in fertilizing sugarcane. There have been some experiments with (?asospirilum), and it seems to have potential. We are now studying all the possibilities for producing it as

quickly as possible. This has to do with what you call generalization. If there is a result, it must be generalized, and we often even have to take certain risks. We cannot spend 10 years testing. In a war, nobody spends 10 years testing in order to solve any problem. In a war, you spend 10 days testing.

During the war we also invented a few things, made certain innovations. We invented a lot. It is a miracle that we did not blow ourselves up. We invented some kind of guided missiles for rifles. We did this without using any supplies. We could not afford to waste time. We did not have normal conditions to conduct such research. We made flechettes [espinas] and grenades which we launched from rifles, shotguns, or from anything else.

In these times, any result have to be implemented immediately. We must have an awareness of the times, the needs, and the circumstances. We have to generalize. This is what generalizing means. Of course, generalization is not the responsibility of the commissions alone, nor of the inventors, efficiency experts, or scientists. Generalization is everyone's responsibility. It is the responsibility of the mass organizations, the state leadership, the party leadership. Everyone has to work on this thing called generalization, or what we could call the rapid application of research results. This is the reason I said that all these issues dealing with essential problems have to be speeded up. They have to be speeded up.

The first question that we must ask is how and when to do this. We have been talking here about the different kinds of energy. We are working on this. However, we have one very valuable type available every year: bagasse. We must establish an intensive program in the sugar industry for producing power from bagasse. We must set a deadline for setting up all the turbogenerators and maintain the others and repair them. If a generator is replaced in one place, it should be taken to another place and installed. They must be repaired and used.

Of course, we are working with fuel. Everything that has been discussed here about the use of domestic oil is very important. Unfortunately, our oil is heavy. There are problems with its extraction, transportation, and use. You have heard about all the calamities, how it has to be heated to be pumped, to load it on ships, and to use it, but that is the oil we have. Oil production has increased this year. We are developing plans to increase it even more. This oil can be used by the electricity industry. This oil can be used by the fuel and cement industries, but we must use surfactants. We must pay maximum attention to the problem of surfactants, of biological or natural origin, like the pine resins, or import them if we cannot find a domestic source. In any case, it represents enormous savings of money and resources, and the availability of these products.

We are working to find oil, and we are conducting this partnership with experienced companies. We have already obtained some results from these partnerships. We hope for much more. With modern technology, we now have to explore down to the last square inch of our territory in the search for light oil, gas, or heavy oil. It would be nice if we had 3 million tons of heavy oil. We would comfortably be able to meet all our electricity needs. Of course, we would have to find the surfactants. We would have to analyze this very well and take all the appropriate measures to keep our electricity industry from deteriorating from having to use this high-sulfur oil.

We are making this effort, and we must continue studying those eight points, which include biogas, wood, coal, wind, and solar energy, wherever there are real possibilities, because we must do realistic things and not dream about things for which the investments would be too big. We must study the mini-hydroelectric plants and the small hydroelectric plants, all of them. We are also studying some important rivers, and there are some fairly advanced projects. It is possible that we will begin to build them soon, even though this will take three or four years. We cannot wait until the hydroelectric plants are finished. It may be three or four, or even five years.

However, all the possibilities for mini-hydroelectric plants and small hydroelectric plants must be studied, all of them. We must calculate well. They tell me that 30 are being built. Now we must study what it would take to build 60, 70, 80, or 100. If there are 500 places where we can build mini-hydroelectric plants, then we must build them. They are certain. Even if they only benefit part of the population, at least part of population will have electricity and renewable energy for sure. The maximum amount of attention must be given to this.

I should tell you that what was spoken of here concerning spare parts was impressive. What is being done with the spare parts is really impressive, like what some sugar refineries explained here, or what the comrades from Argelia Libre Refinery in Las Tunas explained about how they recycle even the smallest piece of metal. The fact is that today, equipment is functioning without spare parts. The fact that there are several thousand sugarcane combines working in this harvest, cutting sugarcane, is a real feat. The fact that the tractors and machinery are working, the fact that we are harvesting rice with rice combines, is a real feat. I would say that what is being done is a miracle.

There is no doubt that in this area a colossal effort is being made. It is one of the areas in which we have advanced the most. We have done this with the cooperation of everyone. The comrades of the Ministry of the FAR, who have many workshops, have helped agriculture with the production of spare parts for combines and other equipment. All the country's resources must be used for the tasks we have ahead of us, to solve the problems we have ahead of us. I would venture to say that what the country is doing without spare parts is a true feat. Suffice it to say that the sugarcane machinery has received 10 percent of what it has historically received, if it has received that much. Resources for the sugarcane harvest are less than 30 percent of what they

were historically. How can we explain that everything is working, everything is operating, without the colossal effort the people are making?

I said that we could do more. I said that we should do more, but this does not deny the real effort we are making in any way. I do not think any other country in the world could have resisted what we have resisted. Everything would have stopped. Everything would have become disorganized and become chaos. How can we manage, with the problems we have with fuel and resources, to plant sugarcane, tubers, and vegetables, to harvest and plant rice, to plant and harvest tobacco? Things are being done in an orderly fashion in the midst of the problems we have, but we are not doing everything we can.

Sometimes we do not have fuel, and this shortage causes demoralization. Immediately, unnecessary restricting changes are made to the plans. Under the tobacco planting plan for Havana Province, 65 caballerias had to be planted with tobacco that is covered. They had 33 caballerias planted by the end of November or the beginning of December. In the first 10 days of December, they did not plant a lot, and it is true they lacked fuel, but there was a lot of land prepared. Those involved in the activity began to think of reducing the planting goal for covered tobacco by 15 caballerias. Comrade [Candido] Palmero realized this and fought against it. I found out from him that they were planning to reduce the plan by 15 caballerias, to plant 50 instead of 65 caballerias. We told them that there was no excuse for them not to plant those 15 caballerias. A little fuel had been found, and we must take advantage of it and plant, because it is a question of having the will to plant. We cannot become discouraged because of these difficulties.

We must plant in December. One excuse was that there were not enough people, that they had to look for some posts from Pinar del Rio, that they had to do a number of things, and they were not doing them. The immediate problem, however, was their accommodation, their attempt to reduce the plan, but they were told no. These leaves are needed, that tobacco is needed. The country needs it for export. It must be done. They are involved in this struggle to plant. There were difficulties last year, and they ended up planting 50 caballerias late in the season.

I can cite another example. Oxen have not been domesticated and used at the rate which was originally planned because some excuse always comes up: rope here, something else there, the oxen are still too young, etc. I think that we should have had a much higher number of domesticated oxen by now. We should already have 200,000 new domesticated oxen, and we do not have them yet. We have reached two-thirds of this goal due to [words indistinct] problems but sometimes there are subjective problems as well. Fuel is found, and so they get behind in domesticating oxen. This requires a tenacious and constant effort. There must be trainers. There must be many things. It is not easy, but I would say these are not easy, but very difficult times.

There were other historical periods in which our people underwent greater difficulties. They experienced difficult times during the 1868 and 1895 wars, and they went through truly terrible times during the time of [Spanish General Valeriano] Weyler's concentration plan. This means that although we are doing great things, there are still some things we can do better. I was talking about the 15 caballerias of tobacco. The other day I read in the newspaper .... [pauses] That night I was talking with Palmero and he told me the story that in a meeting, those responsible for this activity had almost decided to reduce the amount of covered tobacco to be planted by 15 caballerias. This area is indispensable for the twisted tobacco, which is exported.

However, the next day I read in the newspaper that 15 caballerias still needed to be planted, and I said to myself: Not only were they thinking about reducing the plan by 15 caballerias, but they have already told the reporters. The article should have said that 30 caballerias still needed to be planted. An article appeared in the 14 December morning edition of TRABAJADORES saying that everything was moving forward and that 15 caballerias still needed to be planted. I am not blaming the paper or the reporters, but it is clear that they had readjusted the plan by 15 caballerias. They are going to have to "un-readjust" it and plant those 15 caballerias, because in these times, we cannot tolerate that. [applause]

It is difficult to work with great problems because excuses and justifications always come up. There is what we have gone through this month with fuel, the problems that have come up with fuel, and the efforts we have had to make, and the priorities we have had to establish. The sugarcane harvest has begun, we are in the middle of the cold season tuber and vegetable planting, and we are planting tobacco, harvesting rice, preparing land for rice, there is an enormous amount of work and an enormous amount of diesel is needed. Now, we cannot stop until the last ox we planned for is domesticated and at work. The thing is that an ox does the work of 15 men in the fields. Think of the work force it saves. Sometimes there are so many crops that must be planted and harvested that thousands of men would not be enough. If there is a pair of oxen, sometimes one ox, sometimes just one ox with a small implement, it can save 15 workers.

Of course, there are certain crops for which we need an indispensable amount of fuel. For example, it would be impossible to cut all the sugarcane by hand, because we would have to recruit the workers. That army of unemployed that lined up to cut and load sugarcane by hand at the cane plantations does not exist today. It would be impossible to do the sugar harvest. Hundreds of thousands of people would have to be mobilized. Think what it would cost for transportation, camps, clothing, shoes, and food. It must be done with machinery. It is essential that we allocate an amount of fuel to cut sugarcane.

There are also times when a lot of land must be prepared in a short time in order to plant potatoes, tomatoes,

different kinds of vegetables and other crops now. Thousands of caballerias must be prepared in a few weeks, and all these caballerias must be prepared for tobacco, cold-season sugarcane, tubers, vegetables, rice. It must be done in a few weeks with oxen. Therefore, the number of oxen needed would be colossal. So we need a minimum amount of fuel for these kinds of activities. This is unavoidable. There are, however, many kinds of work that must or can be done with oxen, especially in cultivation, crop transportation in many of these places, and collecting the harvests.

I also mentioned the tractors, and how the fields must be prepared in a very short time. There is also the irrigation. Potatoes cannot be planted without irrigation. If a month goes by without rain, you will lose all the seeds, fertilizer, and fuel that was invested to prepare the land, if it does not rain. The irrigation systems need fuel. So we need an essential amount of fuel, which is what we are doing. However, since this fuel is expensive, we must pay for it and use it in the most optimum way. That is why it is more of a crime than ever to waste a single drop of fuel.

We have done many things. The multiple plow has helped so that fields do not become weedy. It has helped save fuel. It is a phenomenal technology, in which our Comrade (?Font) participated. It has caused a revolution in soil preparation, with fuel conservation and improvements in the quality of soil preparation. This is one way to conserve energy, because we have discussed here ways to use energy or energy sources more efficiently. We must not just talk about energy sources, but also about energy conservation. This multiple plow conserves a lot of energy. Oxen conserve a lot of energy, and we must look for new energy sources and use what we have in the most optimum way, invent things that reduce the use of energy.

In short, I am referring to two different angles of the problem: the things we are doing, the feats we are doing; and the things we still need to do, the feats we still need to accomplish. I would say, after being able to attend these forum meetings, that there are reasons to feel optimistic and satisfied.

We have achieved a lot in one year in this field. Just a few months have passed, and we have already obtained 68,000 solutions. We have joined together all the efforts. We have the scientific hubs and also the science unions. All these integrating elements are working together. Next year, we will finish several top quality scientific centers. Let me tell you that some visitors are amazed. They do not and cannot believe what they see here, and they have not seen anything yet. Excellent centers are being built and are almost finished. Many of them will be finished in 1993. Many factories and other things are being built.

Soon we will inaugurate the new facilities of the Cuban Institute for Technical Research [ICIT]. Soon we will inaugurate the Finlay Institute's Plant No. 3 for the meningitis vaccine. Plant No. 2 is almost finished. A magnificent viral vaccine production center has been finished in a few months. Other facilities are already being finished; the final touches are being made. There is the Tropical Medicine Institute. There has been great progress with the monoclonal antibodies center. The (?terminal forms center) is progressing. The laboratories and other facilities of the new part of the School of Pharmacy are progressing. Many investment projects in the pharmaceutical and biotechnical industries are progressing. New things are being done. There has not been a lot of publicity, but these things are being done.

So in another year, we will have a lot more. In another year we could have an even better forum than this one, if that is possible. I hope that we will have even better news by the next forum, and reports will be given on what has been done. The sugarcane industry, the metalworking industry, all those who ought to, will make presentations to us about how they have applied all these things.

I am sure that if this forum was good, next year's will be a lot better. Perhaps we will have .... [pauses] Well, we cannot devote more hours to it, because we would have to talk till dawn. We must see how to make the content of the discussions more specific, not the things done individually, but the things done by each center. The things you do can be discussed in the commission meetings. Here, however, in the plenum, we should discuss programs, how programs are being carried out, how the energy program is being carried out, what has been done. what has been done with every kind of spare parts program, how all these things we have to install in this period have been installed, how the different programs are progressing.

Of course, it was natural to invest some of the time here thinking and reflecting on the way in which the forum has influenced each of the centers. However, next year, we have to talk about programs, how we have fulfilled the different programs. So that in two days, even if we have to talk until midnight—and if some of you get too tired, do not forget that PPG is for sale, and they say that PPG is ergogenic. What does that means, Carlos Gutierrez? That it gives you energy, increases energy? It increases strength, right?—we will debate until midnight, but we will analyze the main programs and how they are going.

I think it could be more interesting. For example, how [word indistinct] are being used for glaucoma. How the programs for producing advanced technology equipment are going. (?This is) an advanced technologies forum and we have not mentioned how the main programs are going. I have repeated .... [pauses] I have already mentioned some of them. I do not want to repeat them. We could have more content. This may be something that may require two days of commission meetings, or two days of plenary sessions. I do not advise having three days of plenary sessions because that could be too long. I prefer two long days to three short days, but the plenary session could review the fundamental things that are being done.

In the commission meetings we will discuss them. This year 1,500 spoke. Maybe next year 2,000 will be able to

speak. Then we need to do what we can to edit a report on the most important things that were discussed. I believe that you would like that, right? To have some kind of report; we would not have to print a lot of copies. [applause]

Actually, we are positioning ourselves in the vanguard in a number of fields. This can be clearly seen. Cuba's prestige in the fields of biotechnology, medicine, and other areas of the scientific arena is increasing day by day. I insisted so much on the famous (?Osomed) because it is not produced anywhere else. The (?Osomed) can solve a great deal of problems for us. Actually, a lot of the equipment we are producing is not for export. If export opportunities arise we will produce it for export—and we are doing that in some cases—but the primary beneficiary of the programs we are developing is Cuba.

Of course, we try to develop products not only for our consumption but for export also. The major plans for vaccine production are not only for our needs but for export also. We could say that we are already the first country in the world that has the greatest coverage in the world against meningitis because it is our exclusive vaccine. Soon we will also be the first country in the world in protection against hepatitis B. These vaccines are produced through genetic engineering. Today, not only do we have vaccination programs but also export programs for the hepatitis B vaccine, which is sold at a good price.

We are working on a vaccine against hepatitis C. We are working on a vaccine against meningitis serotype C. There are countries that have different types. This one is the most difficult. This same vaccine of ours could work against all three kinds—A, B, and C. We are working on a vaccine against something called Haemophilus influenzae, as the scientists say. This is another illness that is quite harmful. There is no vaccine in the world against it. We are working on a vaccine against cholera. We are looking for an effective vaccine against cholera. We are working on triple vaccines, multiple vaccines, vaccines against parasites. We are looking for the nerve growth factor.

Not to leave anything out, we are even working on vaccines against AIDS, in spite of the fact that Cuba is the country that has had the most success in the world in the fight against AIDS. It has been the only place where AIDS has not spread and become a catastrophe. It is where those infected with AIDS have the most security because of the preventive treatments that they have received. Of course, all this is becoming known in the world.

I believe that the progress of our sciences in general, specifically our medical sciences, is unstoppable. Cuba's increasing prestige in that field is already unstoppable, in diagnosis as well as in the production of equipment for diagnosis and treatment of diseases, as well as in the production of medicines. We do not produce all medicines, but we are rapidly developing medicines and reformulations. We cannot produce all of them or all the raw materials, but we are working to produce the greatest number possible in our country, even if we have to import raw materials, in order to reduce the costs.

We are also producing new medicines, and even though we are lacking a number of medicines, no other country has a vaccination program like ours against hepatitis. This program is already being applied in Cuba. No other country has a program like ours against meningitis. This one is also already being applied in Cuba. No other country has a program like ours for the use of products like PPG. It has already begun to be applied in Cuba, and its use is going to be spread during January of next year. In other words, we already have a number of programs that no other country has, even though, paradoxically, we lack certain medicines. In that regard, we are working to reformulate and produce them in our country. Of course, we are making sure that there is never a shortage of essential medicines.

There is a lot of progress being made in that area. We are not working only on food programs or tourist programs or other economic development programs. We are also doing a lot of work in this field of the advanced technology medical equipment industry, medicines, and biotechnology products. We are making great progress.

All this effort comes together, in every way. The people who make spare parts are making a colossal contribution to this effort, because they keep our plants running. They keep our equipment running. It has been proven that anything and everything can be repaired. It has been proven that we can reduce parts imports to a minimum by making or recycling such parts ourselves, so as to import only those that it is absolutely essential to import. It will always be much cheaper to import the metal, because the metal sometimes costs 20 or 15 percent of what the part itself costs, the part imported new. It costs even less to recycle a part, less than it would cost to buy a new part.

The important thing is to know, as we do know, that despite these difficulties, the country continues to move forward; that despite these huge difficulties, we have still have enough spirit to confront them, as well as the ability to find solutions. The important thing is to be aware that we can count on a tremendously strong and intelligent science and technology work force, so as to come out ahead. If any country has a right to come out ahead, it is us, for all these reasons: because of this country's talent, tenacity, firmness, revolutionary spirit, awareness, and heroism! [applause] That is why we are so happy that here, along with technicians and scientists who work in the civilian sphere .... [pauses] You work in the civilian sphere, because we are all defenders using the arms of the Revolution. We are all militiamen. [applause]

However, it is encouraging to see how our comrades from the FAR who work full time—although it is not full time, because they also work part of their time in activities related to the economy—are marching

shoulder to shoulder with this entire movement of innovators and efficiency experts, with this whole forum, a forum we could call scientific and technical. The forum still bears the old, modified name of Spare Parts, Equipment, and Advanced Technologies Forum. Let us think about renaming this forum [applause] as the Scientific and Technical Forum, where everything is connected: BTJ, ANIR members, skilled workers, housewives, farmers, technicians, and scientists.

Let us all be linked together in this great effort and this great example of unity and cooperation. Let our brothers and comrades in the FAR be with us, giving us the assurance that if the cane combines are running, the tanks will run too, and run much better than the combines; [applause] that if the trucks are working, the artillery will work too; [applause] that if the equipment used in civilian life works, the equipment used in civilian life [as heard] will work too. They too are coming up with important innovations, great improvements in efficiency, making big savings.

They are also making new things, because I asked why one award I gave here had been given and was told they had built an airplane. Of course, it is not a combat plane. Nevertheless, building a plane is no insignificant accomplishment. They built a plane that flies. What do you think of that? [applause] This plane flies. For the first time in the history of Cuba, and in the middle of a special period, we have built a plane. They put an engine here and there, and tested it. I asked: But with parachutes? They said: Yes, we made the first flights with parachutes, but we no longer use parachutes in the plane.

This was in the middle of a special period. Of course they cannot go around putting the things they make on exhibit. They can exhibit some of them, I imagine. I have not been able to go see the exhibit. Is the exhibit permanent? Has it opened? So one can go there, to Expo Cuba, at any time to see it. This is very important, because we cannot neglect a single (?front). We cannot neglect the defense front. That is why we have been building civil defense tunnels, investing resources in that. That is why we have invested resources—albeit reduced, as is natural under the current circumstances—in defense. However, the problem of .... [pauses] There too, quality is of the essence: the quality of the ideas, training, safety equipment, and weapons maintenance. This gives everyone great reassurance. We need not fear our military equipment is going to break down, or find itself without parts.

They are conserving everything to the maximum. They have invented procedures for training themselves without using fuel. That is very important, because one must not allow oneself to lose one's marksmanship. One must not lose one's training. Our FAR have made extremely important changes, restructurings, and reductions. However, the Youth Labor Army [EJT] is growing, and it is the most productive force in our agriculture, the best organized, the most disciplined. Now, I don't mean to set the EJT against the contingents. There are excellent contingents. However, as a rule, the EJT units are excellent.

They have made as many reductions as possible, but at the same time, our defense strength is increasing. It is increasing because the men and women of our nation are becoming more aware. It is increasing because the revolutionaries are more aware and more determined to defend the Revolution. It is increasing because it consists of the entire population. I am talking about the entire revolutionary population; there will always be exceptions. It is increasing because the different camps are becoming increasingly better defined, ever more clearly delimited.

It is increasing because we are becoming more convinced everyday. We are becoming more proud of our country and of the Revolution's accomplishments everyday. We are becoming more and more determined to defend socialism, more and more determined to defend our flag, more and more determined to defend our integrity and independence.

It does not matter what ideas the imperialists might have, or what they might believe. Believe me, they cannot even imagine what they are going to encounter should they one day attempt to orchestrate an outing to Cuba. They cannot even imagine what they are going to encounter! [applause]

As a result of this, the Revolution's defensive strength is increasing. To conclude: If we were to try to define what this forum has been, I would say it is an example, and a symbol, of our age.

Socialism or death, fatherland or death, we will win! [applause]

Raul Castro and Entourage Tour Pinar del Rio City

FL2112032292 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 20 Dec 92

[Text] The next leg of Army General Raul Castro's tour of the western region had a solemn beginning in Pinar del Rio City where Raul, together with Commander of the Revolution Juan Almeida Bosque, placed a floral wreath at the newly erected monument in honor of the Zais brothers, young martyrs in the fight against tyranny. Here, Raul was joined by the work team consisting of the previously mentioned politburo members [as heard] and by Fidel Ramos, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] for Pinar del Rio Province.

A prevailing focus of the visitors' interest was the battlefield for military operations. The [word indistinct] geography of the province is enough to turn it into an unyielding bastion of the fatherland if its combatants are willing to emulate the heroic deeds of General Antonio and his Mambisas troops. At every point where the delegation, headed by the second secretary of the central

committee, stopped, or simply passed by, they recalled the heroic deeds of Maceo's hosts in Vinales, Caiguanabo, San Andres, Las Palmas, Luos Lazos, Sumidero. They were able to see other points through the use of binoculars. Maceo in 1895 and 1896, Che Guevara in 1962 during the October crisis, and other places that were too far to be seen were also remembered: Ceja del Negro, Cacara Jicara, El Rubi, (Tumbas del Estorino), Las Taironas.

On this occasion, the purpose was to verify the progress achieved in the construction of defense tunnels and other engineering projects to prepare the battlefield, considering today's enemy, its geographic proximity, its military power, and its sophisticated weapons. [Word indistinct] resist a surprise massive bombing, reject and defeat an invasion of the fatherland's territory, develop the war of all the people to expel even the last imperialist soldier who tries to attack us.

While they analyzed the preparation of the battlefield, the Minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR] and his delegation reviewed the state of the regular and popular forces that take up the arms of national independence. Colonel Pablo Fonseca Espinosa, leader of the light mountain infantry brigade in the mountainous area of (Corno), informed Raul Castro of the combative disposition of the unit, the satisfactory development of its permanent training, its elevated patriotic spirit, its strong discipline, the high morale of its cambatants, its armament vitality, and its fortification projects. As a result of its outstanding work and achievements, Raul and Alemida wrote a fraternal and warm greeting in the book of the unit.

Likewise, Raul and Alemida signed the book of the municipal general staff of Vinales, taking into consideration the intensified military preparation of its militia of territorial troops and brigades of production and defense. This greeting was extended to the municipal leadership of the PCC and its fist secretary, Martha Anelis Hernandez, under whose instruction the masses are mobilized to become more prepared to fight the war of all the people.

As has already become habitual in Raul's visits, considering that beans are just as important or more important than canons in resisting the growing hostility of the United States, and to overcome the difficulties of the special period, Raul Castro has [words indistinct] increase the levels of preservation and rational exploitation of the forests, the reforestation of the hydrographic basins, coffee, tubers, vegetables, and grain crops, and livestock production.

This enterprise, which is relativley new, is in a period of development, but its initial results promise that it will do its part in achieving the objectives of the FAR's food program: to increase, once again, [words indistinct] of self sufficiency to 80 percent.

* Material Incentives for Sugar Workers Reported

93P40070A

[Editorial Report] Havana TRABAJADORES in Spanish of 30 November 1992 on page 3 reports that moral and material incentives will be awarded to sugar cane workers in Holguin to ensure a steady supply of fresh, high-quality cane to sugar refineries during the harvest. Material incentives include low-cost construction and repair of homes, home furniture, and the right to visit restaurants and hotels with one's famiy. Laudivino Bruzon, secretary general of the Cuban Workers' Federation of Holguin, explains that 67 machete brigades, 17 more than during the last harvest, have been organized, as well as 20 reserve brigades to step in to replace combines that break down. The article further reports that Holguin Province is 83.4 percent mechanized for the harvest.

Havana Notes NAFTA Disadvantages for Mexico

PA1912124792 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0100 GMT 19 Dec 92

["Our America" commentary read by Manolo Ortega]

[Text] The North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] between Mexico, the United States, and Canada has been simultaneously signed in the capitals of these three countries by the respective chiefs of state. Now NAFTA is ready to go into effect in January 1994. It went through intense negotiations that lasted approximately 14 months and through much criticism, especially in Mexico.

The agreement that was just signed has created a trade association with more than 360 million consumers and a joint production of $6 billion annually. The development level, however, is very disparate, especially for Mexico, which will be facing two very industrialized neighbors.

One of the main clauses of the agreement calls for the reduction of 20,000 import tariffs over a 10 to 15 year period, but while it is believed that U.S. exports to Mexico will rise to $17 billion in 1994, Mexico's sales to its neighbors will amount to approximately $7 billion.

While the trade balance may be unfavorable to Mexico, it is believed that the South American [as heard] nation could benefit from the opening of 609,000 new jobs, which would contrast with 130,000 new jobs in the United States.

The criticism that the agreement sparked from the beginning results from the fears many sectors have that the Mexican market may be flooded with articles from neighbors that have a much higher development level. This could bring about, and not in the distant future, the bankruptcy of local industries and enterprises.

There are also political aspects to this situation. This has been pointed out by some observers who have noted that

once the reforms proposed by the agreement are consolidated, the United States would resolve the disquieting problem of Mexicans immigrating to the United States, an exodus that U.S. authorities encouraged for years to use, without any guilt, a labor force that was inexpensive.

It must be said that from the very beginning of the free trade agreement talks, experts saw the pact as a first step by the U.S. Republican Party administration, almost at the end of its term in office, to establish a free trade zone that should include all of Latin America.

This is true. At a moment of growing commercial tension with Japan and Europe, the main economic rivals of the United States, Washington wants to consolidate in Latin America and the Caribbean a market favorable to its goods and capital exports.

Economic and political sectors of Chile and the United States have been talking for months about initiating a dialogue between the two countries to establish a trade treaty similar to the one that Mexico has just signed. There is no report yet on what steps may be taken in this direction by the new U.S. Government to be headed by William Clinton, of the Democratic Party, but the U.S. president-elect has already announced his support for the free trade treaty signed recently by Mexico, the United States, and Canada.

An important part of our economic future depends on the construction of strong bilateral commercial ties with Latin America, Clinton said recently.

Aware that the already-powerful nation to the north will soon have a beneficial economic situation with the implementation of the treaty, distrustful Mexican sectors continue to present objections to this free market which may turn out to be not so good for their economy and their environment.

Delegation Meets Chinese Minister; Signs Agreement

FL1912191892 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] Cuba and China, in a joint meeting, have explored trade relations between the two countries and market movements and have signed an agreement that establishes bilateral trade. Cuban Foreign Trade Minister Ricardo Cabrisas traveled to China and met with Chinese State Councilor Qian Qichen in Beijing. Felix Fernando Garrido has further details.

[Begin Fernando recording] Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen met this morning in Beijing with Cuban Foreign Trade Minister Ricardo Cabrisas at the conclusion of the fifth session for joint economic ties and market trade movement. A little before the meeting, Cabrisas and Li Langing, Chinese minister of foreign economic relations and trade [MOFERT], signed an agreement, which they approved in their meeting, for bilateral trade in 1993. A spokesperson for the Cuban Embassy in Beijing said that both parties evaluated the negotiations as positive and expressed their confidence that contacts in this field will be expanded and include new models in 1993.

The efforts of the Chinese-Cuban commission began on 16 December with the Chinese delegation headed by MOFERT Vice Minister Tong Zhiguang. Commenting on this meeting, a spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy said that China, as well as Cuba, has the desire to promote bilateral relations of friendly cooperation, which happily, are developing. The spokesperson observed that these ties are based on the principles of peaceful co-existence, and equality with mutual benefit.

Cabrisas and the delegation, which is accompanying him, will conclude their visit to Beijing on 20 December. They will return to Cuba after visiting sites of interest in the Chinese interior. (end recording]

Air Force Defector Flies Family Back to Florida

PA2012154892 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0541 GMT 12 Dec 92

[Text] Miami (Florida, United States), 19 Dec (EFE)—A former commander of the Cuban Air Force, who fled from Cuba in 1991 aboard a MiG-23 fighter, returned to the island on 19 December in a small airplane. After landing on a highway and picking up his wife and two children, he flew back to Florida, according to a human rights source.

Orestes Lorenzo Perez left his country in March of 1991, after stealing a Soviet-built MiG-23 fighter, in which he flew to a U.S. air base at Boca Chica in Florida. Since then, he has been trying to get permission from the Cuban authorities for his family to leave Cuba, which the authorities denied, thus closing all possibilities, the source added.

Piloting a four-seat airplane, Lorenzo Perez returned to Cuba on 19 December and landed on a highway in the northern Province of Matanzas, where his family was waiting. Once everyone was aboard, the plane took off and headed back to Florida, where it landed without incident, the source said.

Haiti

Police Head Forbids Pro-Aristide Committee March

FL1812172892 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] Lieutenant Colonel Michel Francois, head of police in Port-au-Prince, has forbidden a demonstration which the presidential committee set up by Father Aristide had planned for 18 December in Port-au-Prince. In a letter to Father Antoine Adrien, Lt. Col. Francois tells him that, for security reasons and in view of the current

political situation of the country, he is obliged to forbid the demonstration that was to take place in the capital on 18 December.

To demand the return of the ousted president, Father Aristide's presidential commission intended to stage a march in the capital on 18 December. This march was to begin in front of the parliament and end at Dessalines' statue on the Champ-de-Mars. Through this deed, the 10 members of the commission hoped to show how they condemn the actions—ranging from acts of violence to the formation of the Permanent Electoral Council—that have been committed in the country's political life.

Pro-Aristide Commission Protests Ban

FL1812225192 Port-au-Prince Radio Tropic FM in French 1700 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Report on news conference by the pro-Aristide presidential commission at the Christopher Hotel in Port-au-Prince on 18 December 1992—recorded]

[Text] The presidential commission held a news conference. Jeansoi Joseph was present. Following is his report.

[Begin recording in Creole] [Joseph] The presidential commission has reacted to the ban by police on the patriotic march scheduled for today, 18 December. The presidential commission says in a news conference that it refuses to accept that their constitutional right to demonstrate is being suppressed. The presidential commission says that everybody's rights are now being trampled underfoot and that the only law prevailing at this time is that of the minority that holds power. Let us listen to Father Antoine Adrien.

[Adrien] What is going on in this country? [words indistinct] They are gagging [word indistinct] because one does not have the right to speak, does not have the right to say what one thinks. There is a significant number of articles in the Constitution prohibiting this, but prohibiting it in a country where the law no longer exists. The law is [word indistinct]. An Army office ... [changes thought] How can a simple soldier decide [words indistinct]? That is the law. The law is whatever the Haitian Army desires.

[Joseph] Father Adrien says if the coupist refuse to negotiate, it is the international community that will impose a solution on us, according to a letter sent to him by Joao Clemente Baena Soares who says that Haiti's situation is unacceptable and that he has decided that the OAS will send a new mission to Haiti at the beginning of 1993.

This was a report by Jeansoi Joseph from the Christopher Hotel. [end recording]

Dismissed Educators Ask Students To Support Autonomy

FL1812215592 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] The dismissed boards of directors of three faculties in Port-au-Prince are calling on the students to reassert their support for the university's autonomy. In a communique, the boards of directors of the Faculty of Sciences, the Teachers Training College, and the Faculty of Human Sciences, say they guarantee the normal functioning of activities for the current academic year. They describe as arbitrary the government's measures which, according to them, provoke serious disruptions in the university. These boards of directors believe that Rector Gerard Bissainthe is tactlessly attempting a division maneuver by saying he is ready to talk while maintaining the dismissals of the elected boards.

Ambassador To U.S. Comments on NAFTA, Clinton

PA2012201392 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1607 GMT 20 Dec 92

[Text] Chicago, the United States, 20 Dec (NOTIMEX)—The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) "does not seek to form an exclusive commercial region in North America, nor does it intend to create a fortress" between Canada, the United States, and Mexico, Gustavo Petriccioli, Mexican ambassador to Washington, has said. "I do not think that is the idea of the NAFTA; on the contrary, we want to promote free trade with all the world," Petriccioli stated. The Mexican envoy will be replaced in a few days by Jorge Montano as head of the Mexican mission to the United States.

Petriccioli explained that the signing of the treaty "demonstrates that none of the three countries intends to create a fortress" and isolate the region from the rest of the world. For the Mexican Government envoy to Washington, the message is clear: "We do not want an exclusive club in the northern hemisphere; we want to open it to everyone and that is the message we are sending to all peoples and governments in Latin America."

Petriccioli said that the statement U.S. President-elect William Clinton made in Little Rock, Arkansas, that he will do everything to secure approval of the treaty in Congress "is very important and is clearly part of his economic strategy." "In this last meeting in Little Rock, Clinton reiterated and stressed that he will promote investments, which is what we are trying to do in Mexico and surely in Canada," Petriccioli claimed. He added that this is a key factor for development. "Investments mean jobs; investments will be promoted, supported, and furthered by a free trade agreement, which will complement our economies and will give us opportunities to compete with the rest of the world," the Mexican diplomat underlined.

Concerning doubts about or amendments to the treaty, particularly on environmental or labor issues, Petriccioli recalled that Clinton accepted the Mexican position that "we cannot make amendments to the treaty." "There are 2,000 pages of such delicate and related equilibrium and balance that not one amendment can be made. We are not going to renegotiate further this topic of the draft treaty," the Mexican Government representative said strongly.

He indicated, however, that the government of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari is ready to discuss any other issue of interest to both nations. "This is a very rich, broad, and ambitious Mexico- U.S. agenda. Therefore, we must continue to discuss topics of common interest," Petriccioli reiterated.

Referring to the possible environmental revision of the NAFTA by Clinton, Petriccioli said that this would not be necessary, because for more than a decade, the Mexican and U.S. Governments have been working jointly in environmental protection programs on the border. "And we will continue to work on cooperation," he continued. "We are willing to cooperate and reach agreements with the United States on that matter, as long as the sovereignty of Mexico is respected," the Mexican diplomat asserted.

He underlined that "we will not accept inspections in our territory, just as the U.S. authorities would not like it if we would come out here to see if a company is polluting" the environment. However, "within the framework of respect to sovereignty, I do not think that anyone would oppose inspections. We are willing to talk and make progress," Petriccioli affirmed.

He highlighted the fact that the NAFTA will not affect trade with other Latin American countries, but it will be a gateway to the markets of all the continent. "We already signed a free trade agreement with Chile and we are holding talks with other countries; we want greater freedom to trade because we believe that is the way to development and employment," Petriccioli noted.

The fast track process allows Congress to approve or disapprove an agreement, but it does not allow Congress to amend a negotiated treaty. However, some points of the U.S. legislation would have to be modified or added to adapt them to the treaty, Petriccioli concluded.

Belize

Police Kill 'Reputed Terrorist' To Rescue Diplomat

FL2112020392 Bridgetown CANA in English 2055 GMT 20 Dec 92

[Text] Belize City, Dec 20, CANA—Santos Orlando Betancourt, a reputed terrorist, was shot fatally by police Saturday [19 December] after kidnapping a high ranking Salvadoran diplomat the previous day. Betancourt, who was wanted by at least two Central American countries in connection with the kidnapping earlier this year of the Costa Rican justice minister and the Honduran head of military security, had abducted at gunpoint El Salvador's consul general, Anna-Maria Martinez Sagastume, from her Belmopan office. Police said the diplomat was forced into a vehicle belonging to her mission and driven off by Betancourt.

Betancourt was shot during a police assault on the vehicle and died at the scene after several attempts were made to get him to release Sagastume. The consul general escaped injury, but was taken to the Belize City Hospital and treated for shock.

A police press release said: "When all efforts to persuade him to release his victim failed, it became evident that he was about to kill his hostage, so the police assaulted the vehicle in an attempt to save the life of Sagastume."

El Salvador

Armed Forces Demobilize Counterterrorist Battalions

PA1812220492 San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 17 Dec 92 p 3

[Text] The Armed Forces have demobilized counterterrorist battalions "Sub-Tte Juan Emilio Campos Vaquerano" in San Miguel and "Relampago" Military Detachment No. 5, DM-5, in Cojutepeque.

The demobilization of 220 troops of the 3d Infantry Brigade Battalion in San Miguel and 600 troops of the "Relampago" Battalion was carried out in accordance with the peace agreements.

Lieutenant Colonel Jose Antonio Almendariz, commander of the DM-5, said that this demobilization reflects the Armed Forces' desire to comply totally with the peace agreements to achieve the democracy, freedom, and peace the people want.

Lt. Col. Almendariz said the Armed Forces are preparing to carry out their mission in light of the country's new reality. He stated that these are difficult and significant moments for our institution, but we will face them with integrity, dignity, and courage. He concluded that the Armed Forces, demonstrating discipline and obedience to constitutional order, are complying with the provisions of the peace agreements.

Vargas Announces Army Resumes Normal Activities

PA1812221392 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1800 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Mauricio Ernesto Vargas confirmed on 18 December that Army troops have renewed military training and street patrols after having remained confined to quarters for the past 10 months in fulfillment of the peace agreements.

The Salvadoran Government and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] signed a peace agreement that ended the civil war, which lasted almost 12 years. The agreement called for the Army and FMLN fighters to be confined to quarters during that period.

General Vargas said the Army is now awaiting a presidential order to deploy military units to coffee harvest areas to protect harvest activities, a measure that was announced months ago by President Alfredo Cristiani.

[Begin recording] [Vargas] Activities are back to normal. As of 15 December, training exercises began normally. Regarding coffee growing areas, we are expecting a decision from President Cristiani. The Constitution grants him the prerogative to decide on this as general commander of the Armed Forces.

[Unidentified reporter] General, Army patrol units are no longer accompanied by the UN Observers for El Salvador. Does this mean we are back to normal?

[Vargas] Yes. As I said, we have to realize that the war ended on 15 December. The 15 zones in which the FMLN had concentrated its troops have been demobilized. The FMLN weapons have been destroyed. The Armed Forces maintain their force reduction programs, which will last 24 months. We have returned to normal life. We must view normalcy, of course, as the situation in which the Army performs the mission that the reformed Constitution has assigned to the Armed Forces. [end recording]

Purged Army Officers Not To Be Revealed

PA1812162292 San Salvador DIARIO LATINO in Spanish 16 Dec 92 p 5

[Text] The official list of Armed Forces officers who will be purged at the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Commission will not be made public, Ferman Cienfuegos [true name Eduardo Sancho Castaneda], former commander of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), has said.

The FMLN leader said that "to favor the reconciliation of society and given the fact that there were no winners or losers in the conflict the country recently experienced, it has been decided that the names of the military officers involved in crimes and human rights violations will not be revealed."

The former guerrilla leader added that if reconciliation after the official announcement of the end of the armed conflict is wanted, no one has to leave with dishonor, particularly the top military leaders who were accused by the Ad Hoc Commission.

Additionally, Cienfuegos explained that all the officers who will be purged will be separated from the military institution in January, when the government will officially make the changes of military leaders at the different military garrisons, including the High Command of the Armed Forces.

Meanwhile, Cienfuegos asserted that the FMLN General Command will be dissolved beginning this week and it will become a committee that will direct the future of that group.

In addition, the FMLN leader said that despite the imperfections of the process, it was successfully completed, although there are still skeptics who do not recognize the efforts by the FMLN and the government.

Concerning the inventory of missiles, Cienfuegos clearly stated that 55 missiles were turned over to the UN Observers for El Salvador, 120 were used during the war, 17 were delivered to Nicaragua, and 27 were seized by the Armed Forces.

Finally, the FMLN leader claimed that the fruits of peace the country is experiencing since January can be seen in the increase in the production of basic grains in the countryside. This, he concluded, marks a first indication of what definitive peace will mean for the economic and social development of El Salvador.

Military Chiefs Reiterate High Morale in Army

PA1812175492 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 17 Dec 92 p 3

[Text] The morale of the Armed Forces remains high, above all "because they won the war and preserved the democratic structures," several military leaders have said.

For Deputy Defense Minister Juan Orlando Zepeda, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, FMLN, "had to come down from the mountains, not to parade victoriously with their rifle and uniform, but to submit themselves to the system of Salvadoran authority and laws."

Zepeda denied there had been a "military tie." The Armed Forces won the war because they preserved the structures, not only of a legally established government, but of a system and of the different sectors that compose the country. That was our role."

Throughout the war there was 80 percent degenerate and indiscriminate terrorism. The fact that the IRA [Irish Republican Army] and the ETA [Basque Fatherland and Liberty] exist in Great Britain and Spain, respectively, does not mean there was a tie between the forces in those countries.

Regarding the Armed Forces purge, Gen. Zepeda noted that "the military serve the armed institution for a term which ends at a given moment."

In that sense, he reiterated that the purge is not a triumph of the FMLN "as they are telling the world."

He added that the military submitted themselves to an evaluation and "the Armed Forces maintain a lofty spirit of struggle, high morale, and will continue to accompany the people."

He noted that the FMLN will maintain the democratic system of government and will support the government that wins power.

He stated, however, that among the members of the Armed Forces there is "some type of fear or uncertainty," because the parameters of the members of the Ad Hoc Commission were not the best for the evaluation. "Very subjective parameters were used," he said.

Captain Fernando Menjivar, the Navy commander, said the events on 15 December signify the total disarmament of the FMLN, which has become a political entity—something that is very important to achieving peace and democracy.

He also said the Armed Forces members hope the FMLN will honor its agreements, because there are doubts in that respect.

Regarding the Armed Forces morale, Menjivar said "it has always been and continues to be high." He added that the members of the institution are trained professionals who will carry out whatever the Armed Forces commander "orders."

For Colonel Hector Leonel Lobo, Air Force commander, the definite end of the conflict "is hope inspiring for the Salvadoran people."

Regarding the speech by FMLN Leader Shafik Handal, Col. Lobo said that it appeared to be somewhat "conciliatory," but at the same time casts some doubt on their sincerity in fulfilling the agreements."

He noted that the Armed Forces are trained to fulfill whatever mission is assigned.

He said the Armed Forces are trained to carry out a series of functions to benefit the people, especially in times of disaster.

The military leader said the morale of the Armed Forces is high and that there are many military who are being trained for civilian posts, without neglecting their military preparedness.

Regarding the Armed Forces purge, he said the military are not familiar with the list drafted by the Ad Hoc Commission, but said he hoped they have made an adequate selection, not with the wish to cause harm, but to achieve reconciliation.

"That is our hope," he said.

Honduras

Armed Forces Restructure High Command

PA1912201592 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2256 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 18 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—The top command of the Honduran Armed Forces was restructured on 18 December on orders from General Luis Alonso Discua, the commander in chief, who reinforced his leadership within the institution. Discua denied the changes are part of a "purge" to consolidate his military power and described them as "normal rotation."

The new appointments are as follows: General Reynaldo Andino, chief of the joint chiefs of staff; General Jose Guillermo Paredes, Army commander; Colonel Bruno Fontana, Navy commander; and Colonel Mario Hung Pacheco, chief of police.

General Lazaro Avila, former chief of the joint chiefs of staff, will be the new defense minister, an administrative position in this country since the power to command lies with the Armed Forces commander in chief. Also promoted were Generals Jose de Jesus Banegas to finance officer and Oscar Armijo to inspector general.

The only branch commander who kept his post is General Hector Castro Cabus, who will remain the Air Force commander.

The Honduran Armed Forces, with a strength of 27,000, continue to exert extraordinary influence in this Central American country, although civilians have been governing uninterruptedly since 1982.

Nicaragua

H. Ortega on Sandinist Jarquin's Call for Resignation

PA2012000092 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 19 Dec 92 pp 1, 10

[Report by Juan Jose Lacayo]

[Text] General Humberto Ortega, Army commander in chief, has played down the call made by Sandinist Edmundo Jarquin, a former leader of the National Assembly, for Ortega's resignation. The military leader does not believe he is promoting political polarization by remaining in the institution.

Questioned by a small army of journalists, Ortega commented on Jarquin's statements in a tone of voice that alternated between moderate and arrogant.

"The truth is that under this marvelous system in Nicaragua, everyone has his opinion. It is that person's opinion and that is all there is to it," Ortega said.

"During the last few years, the role the institution and its members— in this case the Army and we who lead it—are playing has been clearly proven," he added.

"I have no further comments, as I do not see this (Jarquin's request) to be very important," the Sandinist People's Army leader said.

When asked if Jarquin's opinion reflected that of other sectors in the Sandinist movement, the Army chief responded: "I think the majority of society has come to understand the historic role Army members are playing in strengthening our democracy, which we are trying to consolidate."

"The most important thing here is that the people are witnessing the difficult, complex, and dramatic efforts we are making to attain stability and economic recovery".

When ACAN correspondent Filadelfo Martinez asked Ortega if he planned to remain in the Army until 1997, the general was visibly annoyed and arrogantly responded: "Do you not see me here?"

Ortega was also asked about the announcement made by President Chamorro for the mayors to continue with the Army reductions. He replied: "The Army is not the problem. The problem is that all Nicaraguans and all of society must move, once and for all, with a more patriotic, responsible, mature, and serious attitude to find the fundamental stability that will allow us to recover our economy."

Ortega also announced that during the last Council of Commanders he had approved several specific plans that "will be felt" during the first half of 1993 to do away with the gangs of criminals harassing regions one, five, and six.

"The priority is to double the Army's capability to impose order over the criminal forces."

Japanese Prime Minister Announces Donations

PA1812193592 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 16 Dec 92 p 1

[Text] Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa on 16 December announced in a letter addressed to President Chamorro that his government has decided to make two important donations to Nicaragua.

The first donation of $100,000 will be delivered to the OAS to be used in a minesweeping project estimated at about $3.5 million in Nicaragua. Several donor countries have offered their generous assistance to meet this amount.

The second donation is for 900 million yen, equivalent to $7.2 million. This will be a "nonrefundable" donation for "non projects." In other words, the amount financed is not tied to any specific project.

President Violeta Chamorro expressed her satisfaction with the two donations that were announced to her through diplomatic channels on the morning of 16

December. She thanked the Japanese Government and people for their generous contribution, which will undoubtedly aid in strengthening the democratic process in Nicaragua.

Italian Government Donates $1.7 Million

PA1812212292 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1830 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Report by Juan Bautista Caballero]

[Text] The Italian Government has donated $1.7 million for the disarmament program being implemented by the Violeta Chamorro government.

Fernando (Grazzi), charge d'affaires at the Italian Embassy in Managua, reported the donation while participating in a demobilization ceremony in Leon on 17 December. [passage indistinct] The disarmament program is aimed at contributing to the work being done by the Special Disarmament Brigade, which to date has collected some 43,000 weapons. Some 30,000 remain to be collected, according to Lieutenant Colonel Ramon Ernesto Sosa.

Panama

Marchers Commemorate 20 Dec Invasion Anniversary

PA2012235092 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2244 GMT 20 Dec 92

[Text] Panama City, 20 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—Approximately 1,000 civilians and former military personnel are participating in a "Black March" to repudiate the 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama and Guillermo Endara's administration. The third anniversary of the invasion is being commemorated today, 20 December.

There have been no incidents so far in the march, which is moving along the Panamanian capital's main avenue and will end in Chorrillo, a neighborhood that was devastated by bombs and fire on 20 December 1989 resulting in an undetermined number of deaths.

Isabel Corro, leader of the Association of Relatives of Invasion Casualties, is silently leading the peaceful march. Many of the marchers are wearing black and holding black flags and Panamanian flags with mourning wreaths.

Others are dragging a U.S. flag and chanting slogans against U.S. President George Bush, who ordered the invasion, and demanding justice for the relatives of the victims of the military action.

Democratic Revolutionary Party [PRD] leaders are also participating in the march. The PRD was the ruling party when the United States invaded Panama and overthrew the government of Manuel Antonio Noriega, who was later sentenced in Miami to 40 years on drug trafficking charges.

Former military officers such as Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Delgado and members of the Movement of the Colon Province Unemployed and the National Federation of Public Workers are accompanying the demonstrators.

At the time of the invasion, the Panamanian Army was dismembered by the United States. The institution was later proscribed by a decree issued by President Endara, although he failed to eliminate it from the Constitution because the people rejected the proposal in a 15 November plebiscite.

Presidential Palace Guards Note Bomb Scare

PA2012184592 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1630 GMT 20 Dec 92

[Text] Panama City, 20 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—A bomb scare on 20 December led to the deployment of security forces in the area around the presidential palace after a "strange" black briefcase, which apparently was empty, was found.

Today marks the third anniversary of the start of the U.S. military intervention that toppled the regime of General Manuel Antonio Noriega, dismembered his army, and allowed the installation of Guillermo Endara Galimany, who had won the 7 May 1989 elections that were voided by the military.

Guardsmen at the presidential palace, the residence of President Guillermo Endara and his wife Ana Mae, told ACAN-EFE "it is not true" there was a bomb threat, although several news media reported the briefcase was found in a building next to the palace.

Other sources in the security services told ACAN-EFE "there is something to it," when asked to confirm officially the report on the device at the palace, known as the Palace of the Herons.

Yesterday, five policemen were wounded, apparently slightly according to the official report, when the percussion cap of a homemade bomb found in the parking lot of the Mayor's Office went off.

Mayor Mayin Correa had received threats from radical anti-U.S. groups because she organized a "Christmas Fantasy" parade attended by thousands of people. The groups felt the activity was meant to make the people forget the U.S. invasion.

The presence of that explosive and today's threat breaks the pattern of attacks over the past three years of never being carried out during weekends.

Anti-U.S. groups that reject the U.S. presence in this country have conducted attacks on and hurled explosive devices at state buildings and U.S. interests on approximately 20 occasions. It is believed these groups comprise former servicemen and civilian supporters of Noriega, who is currently serving time in a U.S. jail for drug trafficking.

Article Calls For Reflection on U.S. Invasion

PA2012155692 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 20 Dec 92 p 1A

[From the "As of Today" editorial column]

[Text] The December 1989 invasion, the third anniversary of which we mark today, must prompt us all to reflect. It must first prompt reflection by the U.S. Government and its intelligence agencies, which for 18 years supported, with an enthusiasm that is difficult to comprehend, the outlaws who seized power in 1968. Then they planted a psychiatric [psiquiatrica] time bomb in Panama, which almost left us without a country when it went of, and the wounds of which have not yet healed. Have they learned their lesson? No. In Peru they are about to commit the same mistakes that had such bloody results here, with Noriega's double (who now sits in Fujimori's office).

The Panama Defense Forces, (FDP) placed their loyalty to their mad commander above their constitutional duty to defend the country against all enemies, foreign or domestic. They knew their commanders were common criminals, serving the narco-mafias. Many paid for this false sense of duty with their lives, when their commanders—as cowardly as they were arrogant—left them at the stake.

The pseudo nationalists, who encouraged Noriega to take an ever more defiant stance, only to flee when things became ugly, must also reflect. Finally, all Panamanians, without exception, who allowed a dictatorship to consolidate out of pure personal convenience [must reflect]; a dictatorship that could only have such a tragic outcome as that of 20 December 1989.

M-20 Announces 'Legitimate Armed Struggle'

PA1912183292 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 19 Dec 92 p1A

[Report by Juan Pritsiolas]

[Text] The 20 December Movement (M-20)—On the eve of the third anniversary of the U.S. invasion—has announced it will continue with its "harassment task" against the Panamanian Government, and warned of possible actions against the lives of the "traitors" who came to power three years ago.

An M-20 statement says that the movement has displayed excessive prudence and patience, but we have also proven our operational capacity and firmness when it has been necessary. No traitor has paid with his life yet, but this may not be true in the future, unless there is a simple change in policy."

The subversive group made clear that its commitment to carry out a "legitimate armed struggle," does not close the doors to a "possible national understanding," free from outside interference.

According to the M-20, as long as the U.S. occupation continues and the government does not show its will to correct some of its mistakes, "the doors to reconciliation will become smaller and the path to violence will become irreversible."

The group also demands a clear set of rules and no persecutions during the upcoming election, otherwise the event may turn into a bloody confrontation, the possibilities for reconciliation will disappear, and the path to violence will be the final sentence.

U.S. Implication in Arias Resignation Suggested

PA2012191292 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 20 Dec 92 p 4A

[Article from the opinion-editorial page by political analyst and journalist Mario Velazquez: "Re-Change Operation"]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The resignation of First Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon seems much more dangerous and concerning to me, if examined within the context of a recent event, which can be considered a premonition. I am referring to a speech by U.S. Ambassador Deane Hinton several days ago, before the American Chamber of Commerce, during which he—in his customary harsh manner—strongly criticized the Endara government. Hinton warned the Panamanian Government would not survive if corruption undermines the people's trust. The U.S. ambassador said that drug trafficking and money laundering are the two ills plaguing Panamanian society. Hinton said the Panamanian people expect leadership and public service from their leaders, and called on officials of the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches to place national issues before personal or partisan considerations. He admitted that the internal fighting in the government obstructs the efficient task of leading the country and affects the promise of democracy.

This strong criticism by the U.S. ambassador of the job being done by the Endara administration, indicates that the United States is widening the distance between it and the current Panamanian Government, and that it could be preparing a change. U.S. authorities are aware of the Endara administration's failure, but they are more concerned about the failure of the coached democracy model, which they debuted in Panama three years ago.

Does Arias Calderon's resignation fit into this possibility in any way? Is Arias Calderon's resignation part of a strategy charted by Hinton to make it easier and more palatable for Endara to eventually leave power? Does having [now First Vice President] Guillermo Ford next in line of succession mean that Endara would be willing to accept the change ordered by Washington, now that his political enemy's access to power has been eliminated? Has Arias Calderon sacrificed the vice presidency, as part of a double play maneuver, in order to get

rid of Endara and open the doors of the presidency to Billy Ford, thus eliminating a possible contender for the 1994 election?

Certain clues found through sheer political logic, and suggested by the dynamics of current public events, and the sinful birth of this government, lead one to believe that we are getting closer to a re-change operation, which has no specific date yet but has been noted on the agenda of those who set forth the tutored democratic model for Panama, and is based on the evaluation our country receives.

Official Notes Losses Caused by Banana Quotas

PA1912194192 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 19 Dec 92 p2

[Report by Yali Enrique Pitti]

[Text] The national banana industry and treasury could lose approximately 100 million balboas a year and 17,000 jobs in the different banana plantations as a result of the decision by the EC Council of Agriculture Ministers to impose on Panama and other Latin American countries a quota and import licensing system for the Single European Market.

Commerce and Industries Minister Roberto Alfaro made the warning on 18 December, adding that the decision by the EC Council of Agriculture Ministers will paralyze 50 percent of the country's banana exports to the European market, starting next June.

Alfaro announced that the imposition of a quota and licensing system for Latin American bananas will lead to a decline in the price of the product, and the difference will be left in the hands of the marketing companies. He added that said licenses would be managed by EC importers, "who will logically negotiate the quotas and, thus, turn the licenses into a Persian bazaar and harm Latin American banana farmers.

The official noted the government's position will be adamant regarding the EC Council decision, adding the Latin American presidents will meet a few days from now in Colombia to make a final decision regarding the crisis in the area's banana industry.

Roberto Alfaro said it would be interesting to know if the international lending organizations, which have demanded that our country open its market and lower its tariffs to open itself to international commerce, will support Panama by opposing at the EC all the restrictive measures on our chief export product.

Free Zone Manager Denies Money Laundering Charge

PA1912191492 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 19 Dec 92 p 1A

[Article by Carmen Elida Contreras]

[Text] Jaime Ford Lara, manager of the Colon Free Zone, on 18 December denied that he was involved in money laundering or that he had any connections with the former Dadeland National Bank of Miami.

Ford Lara described as "negative publicity" the reports that link him and Henry Ford to alleged money laundering operations, adding "this [publicity] will probably not be the last" so long "as one is a politician and public figure."

The investigations are part of the interrogation done by the U.S. DEA on 7 December 1990 of alleged narcotics trafficker Milian Rodriguez.

"The only link I had with Mr. Milian Rodriguez is that we went to school and college together, but I do not have any connections with him outside the friendship we had at the university," Ford Lara said, adding that "he deserves to be in prison for being involved in money laundering."

Stressing his innocence, Ford Lara emphasized that both the U.S. Government and the Panamanian Government know he has had nothing to do with the case.

Nonetheless, according to the DEA document that LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA gained access to, Ford Lara helped move Milian Rodriguez' money through 12 corporations, for which he and the Fernandez Lara family received payments "for their services in the conspiracy to launder money."

Argentina

Interior Minister on Meeting With U.S. Ambassador

PY2112124192 Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 20 Dec 92 p 4

["Exclusive" interview with Interior Minister Gustavo Beliz by Juan Maria Coria in Buenos Aires, date not given]

[Excerpt] [Coria] What were the issues discussed during lunch with U.S. Ambassador Terence Todman?

[Beliz] General issues. It is important to keep in contact with all the diplomats accredited in the country. I have a friendly relation with Todman, and I see him as much as I can.

[Coria] Were corruption and drug trafficking discussed during the meeting?

[Beliz] Corruption and drug trafficking are challenges to modern democracy. In the face of these challenges we can neither assume the existence of conspiracies nor remain at a standstill. But I should reiterate that we discussed general issues, without an agenda.

[Coria] One of the issues that creates concern is security. What do you think of it? How can the struggle against crime can be carried out effectively?

[Beliz] I have great confidence in the professional qualities of the police. The police are capable of carrying out an effective struggle against organized crime. The actions aimed at integrating the police within the community are important, as people can thus immediately feel secure if at any time something threatens their daily lives. [passage omitted]

Government Confirms Sale of Planes to Sri Lanka

PY1812203492 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2040 GMT 16 Dec 92

[Text] Buenos Aires, 16 Dec (NA)—Air Force Chief of Staff Brigadier Jose Julia confirmed today the sale of four Argentine made IA-48 Pucara airplanes worth over $10 million to Sri Lanka.

Julia added that the sale of the airplanes to Sri Lanka "was authorized by the national executive branch," and includes the sale of spare parts in a separate transaction for their maintenance.

"The sale to Sri Lanka is a very important one. It involves four Pucara airplanes, which will give the state between $10 and $11 million," Julia told NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS.

On a related subject, Brigadier Julia said that the technical mission that traveled to the United States to evaluate the condition of the A4-M airplanes found that "the planes are in better condition than expected."

The purchase of the airplanes from the United States will not be made until the middle of next year, because "they have not flown for a long time, and it is necessary to make a general inspection before working on their modernization."

At the conclusion of the ceremony installing Brigadier Jorge Gimenez as deputy chief of the Armed Forces Joint Staff, Brigadier Julia said that the airplanes will fly to the country after the U.S. Senate approves their sale.

French Mission Seeks Atomic Energy Agreements

PY1912191592 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0343 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] Buenos Aires, 18 Dec (TELAM)—A mission from the French Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) has come to Argentina to meet National Commission for Atomic Energy [CNEA] officials and discuss the possibility of signing cooperation agreements on the peaceful use of atomic energy.

This information was disclosed by the Foreign Ministry, which pointed out that the French Government's mission headed by Hubert de la Fortelle, CEA director of international relations, "is the most important one in the last few years."

The members of the French delegation of experts already have held working meetings with officials from the Foreign Ministry and the CEA.

During these meetings, the French mission members were able to pinpoint specific areas of future cooperation such as nuclear safety, materials, recycling of nuclear waste with low and medium- level radioactivity, and public acceptance of atomic energy.

The visitors' agenda also included technical visits to CEA headquarters, the Constituentes Nuclear Center, the Ezeiza Nuclear Center, the Atucha-I nuclear power plant, the Bariloche Nuclear Center, and the Pilcaniyeu enrichment plant.

According to local diplomatic sources, the French mission members "pointed out that they got a favorable impression of Argentina's accomplishments in the last couple of years in the field of the peaceful use of atomic energy," which "will enable both countries to embark on joint projects of cooperation in the field of the peaceful use of [words indistinct]."

New Air Force General Staff Coordinator Installed

PY1812201492 Buenos Aires PAGINA/12 in Spanish 10 Dec 92 p 12

[Text] Brigadier General Jose Antonio Julia, the Air Force chief of staff, yesterday installed Brigadier Major Alberto Alegria as the Air Force general staff coordinator, the second-highest post in the Air Force. The post of coordinator was established after Brigadier Tomas

Rodriguez, who was then Air Force deputy chief of staff, retired after he raised corruption charges against the chief of staff. Alegria replaces Brigadier Ronald Graton, who will retire after one year of holding the post of coordinator.

Military Chiefs of Staff Request Salary Increase

PY2012010492 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 18 Dec 92 p 12

[Excerpt] President Carlos Menem and Defense Minister Erman Gonzalez had dinner last night with the four Armed Forces chiefs of staff at the Olivos Residence. In addition to toasting the season's greetings, the military leaders took advantage of the opportunity to raise the necessity of approving a salary increase for military personnel.

New Lieutenant General Mario Candido Diaz (the Senate approved his promotion to this rank on 16 December), the Joint Staff chief; Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Martin Balza; Navy Chief of Staff Admiral Jorge Ferrer; and Brigadier General Jose Julia, the Air Force chief of staff, pointed out to the president that the salaries issue is one that requires the most urgent solution in this area. The military leaders were not alone in their request, because Minister Gonzalez agreed that this issue deserved a quick solution. [passage omitted]

European-Brazilian Consortium Wins Satellite Bid

PY1812175592 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 17 Dec 92 p 5

[From the "Business World" column]

[Text] The international tender to build the first Argentine domestic satellite was won yesterday by a European-Brazilian consortium with their offer to charge users an annual fee of 1.2 million dollars for the use of the satellite. The runners-up, the Macri-Clarin-General Electric consortium had offered to charge a rental fee of 1.75 million dollars. Apart from offering to charge the lowest rental, the winning consortium, formed by Aerospatiale, Alcatel Space, Alenia Spazio, Deutsche Aerospace and Embratel [Brazilian Telecommunications Company], also offered much more transmission power and a wider band width. The cost of building, launching and placing the satellite in orbit together with building all the ground facilities has been estimated at 1.5 billion dollars, which will be financed by the consortium itself. In this respect representatives of Deutsche Aerospace in Argentina stated yesterday that most of the capital outlay will take place in the first three years with the satellite beginning to operate in January 1995.

Uranium Deposit Discovered in Chubut Province

PY1812151392 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1733 GMT 17 Dec 92

[Text] Buenos Aires, 17 Dec (NA)—According to information released in Buenos Aires today, National Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA) experts have discovered a high-grade uranium deposit in Cerro Solo, Chubut Province.

CNEA Chairman Miguel Mondino reported that final surveys have found three uranium layers that might yield enough uranium to guarantee the operation of 10 nuclear power plants the size of Embalse and Atucha II.

The uranium deposit is located in Cerro Solo, Chubut Province, about 2,000 km from Buenos Aires.

Mondino explained that this discovery was made despite the fact that only between 10 and 15 percent of the potentially uranium-rich area is being prospected.

According to nuclear experts, the new deposit will increase the amount of uranium ore currently available by 50 percent.

Poll Shows Decline in Menem's Image in Last Year

PY2012010592 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2211 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] Buenos Aires, 19 Dec (NA)—President Carlos Menem's positive image declined within one year from 50.3 to 37.4 percent, although it improved slightly in December compared with the preceding month.

This was the result of a poll involving 1,000 people carried out in the federal capital and greater Buenos Aires by the Lynch, Menendez, and Nivel consulting company.

According to the poll, the people's positive opinion of the government's performance declined from 48.3 percent in late 1991 to the current 35.9 percent.

Meanwhile, the economic policy implemented by Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo declined from 48.3 percent in late 1991 to the current 34.4 percent. [sentenced as received]

According to the consulting company's poll, the president's positive image improved slightly in December to 37.4 percent of the people having a favorable opinion of him, compared with 37.0 percent in November 1991, .

Julio Miranda Elected Tucuman National Senator

PY1812151092 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 17 Dec 92 p 1

[Text] (DYN)—San Miguel de Tucuman Peronist union leader Julio Miranda was elected last night as this province's new national senator replacing Justicialist Arturo Jimez Montilla after tight balloting during a legislative

San Juan Province Governor Relieved of Duties

PY2012221592 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 19 Dec 92 p 1

[Excerpt] (DYN)—In an historic session of the San Juan Parliament yesterday, Governor Jorge Escobar was relieved of his official duties after only 11 months if office. Escobar was found guilty on charges of "failing to carry out his duties as governor" and for "corrupt administration of office." The assembly also banned Escobar from holding any public office for the next four years.

Nineteen members of the assembly's 21 member prosecuting committee found the governor guilty on both counts. Given the almost unanimous rejection of the governor in these first two votes, seven other charges against Escobar were not dealt with. Only the president of the prosecuting committee, Rogelio Cerdera, and another Justicialist, Agustin Aravena, voted against the charges.

Somewhat downcast, no longer the proud San Juan version of Alberto Fujimori, Escobar unexpectedly appeared before the committee to present his own defence before being obliged to leave during the voting process. [passage omitted]

Bolivia

Cuban Military Officers and Professionals Visit

PY1912015492 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish 10 Dec 92 p A7

[Text] "We are a sovereign country," Armed Forces Commander General Oscar Vargas Lorenzetti said in response to unofficial remarks by U.S. Embassy sources who objected to the arrival in the country of 42 officers and professionals from the Cuban Defense School, without congressional authorization.

"It is a top level institute and not a military unit. Besides, we have informed the executive branch in order to have approval from the legislative branch," Vargas explained.

The Cuban Defense School members arrived on 8 December in the country at the invitation of the Bolivian Armed Forces, in reciprocity for the invitation extended twice to the National War College to visit Cuba.

"We hope that the officers and professionals of the (Cuban) school will have a pleasant stay in our country, become acquainted with our situation, and learn about our needs and problems and about our identity as Bolivians," the Armed Forces commander explained.

Vargas said the Cuban delegation will remain in Bolivia until 15 December and that a special activities program has been prepared for a 72-hour visit to La Paz, and another visit to Cochabamba where they will stay 48 hours. They also will make a 48-hour visit to Santa Cruz and then will return to their country.

Cuban delegation head Leonardo Andollo Valdez declined to give an opinion on the U.S. Embassy's objections.

"I believe this is a matter that concerns Bolivians and Cubans alone, and each must have the right to an opinion," Andollo Valdez said. He explained that this visit is part of an exchange program agreed upon between the two countries.

Meet Paz Zamora at Government Palace

PY1912230692 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish 10 Dec 92 p A7

[Text] President Jaime Paz Zamora said the arrival of 42 Cuban officers in our country is part of "Bolivia's independent foreign relations, within the limits that this modern world can admit and within which Bolivia is trying to pursue its policy."

Paz Zamora was pleased to say: "The other day a commentary was made in our country, criticizing Bolivia for not voting in the United Nations on an issue concerning Cuba. A favorable one and an unfavorable one. Here are the Cuban officers."

The president pointed out that each step of the government's foreign policy is carefully pondered and gauged, strictly conforming to our national interests.

Paz Zamora said: "We have very good diplomatic relations with Cuba. They are at a very good level."

It Is Not Necessary To Invite Fidel

Asked about the possibility of inviting Cuban President Fidel Castro to visit our country, Paz Zamora noted that, although this possibility has not been considered, all the presidents of friendly countries are invited to visit Bolivia whenever they want to. Paz Zamora, however, made it clear that, at this moment, national interests do not urgently require inviting the Cuban president.

Afterward, Paz Zamora recalled that there is a precedent in our country for extending an invitation to Fidel Castro. This occured when former Senate President Oscar Zamora invited the Cuban president to attend Victor Paz Estenssoro's inauguration.

Paz Zamora said: "Oscar Zamora extended an invitation for him to attend the inauguration ceremony, and he excused himself and sent Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez. There is a precedent for an invitation."

Visit at the Palace

The 42 officers and professionals of the Cuban Defense School were received by the president at Government Palace. Their representative, Leonardo Andollo Valdez, was grateful for the invitation that, incidentally, coincided with the official celebration of the bicentennial of Marshall Andres de Santa Cruz and with the presence of Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori [as published].

A Sign of Solidarity

During the visit with Paz Zamora, the Cuban delegation head expressed to Paz Zamora his admiration for the efforts to resolve the complex problems facing the American nations.

Andollo Valdez said: "It is only possible to hold this type of meeting when there is strong will and political fortitude vis-a-vis the pressures of those who are not interested in the rapprochement of our nations and particularly our Armed Forces, especially now that the United States is making all types of effort to isolate our country and strangle it."

Ossio, Others on Extradition Treaty With U.S.

PY1812194192 La Paz Television Nacional Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[Text] Bolivian Vice President Luis Ossio Sanjines attended the opening of the legal library at the Supreme Court of La Paz District in Cochabamba, which is presided over by Alberto Bellot San Martin. The ceremony also was attended by other Supreme Court justices, high-ranking government officials, and guests. Everyone stressed the value of this library, which will be at the service of legal experts.

After the ceremony was over, Vice President Luis Ossio Sanjines was asked about the U.S. call for a new extradition treaty and the Supreme Court's position. This is what he said:

"I believe the proper thing to do would be for the United States to sign this treaty [not further specified] and ratify it and for Bolivia to ratify it as well, and we will have what is wanted. This treaty is the outcome of an international agreement that protects the interest of small countries and sets forth security provisions based on other international treaties that are backed by the OAS and other international organizations.

"I believe that the concerns of the Bolivian Supreme Court and the Bolivian Embassy [as heard], as well as others who are studying the issue, can be resolved in this manner. I have suggested to the U.S. Embassy that it should advise its government to sign and ratify this treaty. As soon as they state their willingness to do so Bolivia can ratify it as well, and the rest of the Latin American countries can do so too within the multilateral framework that is more appropriate for a small country like Bolivia while giving, at the same time, a certain amount of security to the large country, namely the United States."

Justice Alberto Bellot San Martin also had something to say about this issue:

"Many people have expressed their opinion about the ruling on the extradition request. The Supreme Court has had to evaluate all opinions before leaning in favor of an extradition treaty between the United States and Bolivia. This treaty probably will provide for specific cases because the 1900 treaty did not cover narcotic offenses. The 1988 Vienna Convention does include general provisions against drug trafficking.

"I agree with the Supreme Court's position that a new treaty should be drawn up including new types of offenses such as drug trafficking, illegal accumulation of wealth, and other crimes. I am sure that there will be such a treaty."

Dr. Rene Gutierrez, dean of the Greater University of San Andres' Law School, expressed his opinion as well:

"We believe a new treaty is necessary. This has always been our position. We agree in this regard with Supreme Court Chairman Edgar Oblitas Fernandez and Supreme Court Justice Ernesto Poppe Zubieta. We agree with them and their legal arguments in this regard. We have made it very clear on several occasions, including the recent seminar on extradition."

On the same subject, here are the remarks of Interior Minister Carlos Saavedra Bruno:

"Based on the Supreme Court's arguments and taking into account its consequences for the country's legal framework, the executive branch is carefully studying the situation and may disclose its opinion some time next week."

Brazil

President Franco Denies Cabinet Reshuffle Plans

PY1812233492 Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network in Portuguese 2100 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] Interim President Itamar Franco today denied that he is thinking of a cabinet reshuffle after [suspended President Fernando] Collor's impeachment is approved. President Itamar broke a 15-day period of silence with the media today. As he arrived at Planalto Palace early this morning, the president spoke with reporters and expressed his regrets to the media. He demonstrated that he was very disappointed with what he called lies published in the newspapers. The president denied the existence of a cabinet reshuffle plan after Collor is impeached. He also denied that economist Dercy Munhoz had given him an alternative economic plan. President Itamar said he talked with Munhoz like he was chatting with an old friend. The president also denied that Paulo Haddad would continue as chief of the Finance and Planning Ministries. According to the president, this is a temporary situation. Itamar said that he does not yet have either a profile, a name, or a term to announce the name of the new finance minister.

Minister Returns From Meetings With Clinton Team

PY1912201092 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 18 Dec 92 Political Section p 5

[Text] Brazilian Foreign Minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso has returned from the United States full of optimism. He spent four days in the United States holding meetings with members of Bill Clinton's future administration. As far as the minister is concerned, there are no deadlocks between Brazil and the United States. "What we have here is a conflict of legitimate interests," the minister said about the industrial patents issue and the surcharge on steel imports. He stated that he plans to talk with Clinton on the phone without going through any middlemen.

Cardoso held talks with Warren Christopher, the future U.S. secretary of state, and Ronald Brown, the future secretary of commerce, science, and technology. He concluded that the two countries share the same thoughts, especially about nuclear nonproliferation, environmental protection, democracy and human rights, and freedom of trade.

Haddad's Days in Government Possibly Numbered

PY1912212392 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 17 Dec 92 Section 1 p 8

[Analysis by Josias de Souza, executive director of FOLHA DE SAO PAULO's Brasilia bureau]

[Text] (Planning) Minister Paulo Haddad's days in government are numbered. President Itamar Franco is determined to counter some of his assistant's ideas. According to confidential data conveyed to some of his advisers, Franco will not hesitate to remove Haddad. Franco just believes it is tactically better to wait for the vote on [suspended President Fernando] Collor's impeachment next week.

Itamar Franco is determined to immediately reactivate the country's economy, curbing the recession. He also has been seduced by the idea of immediately reducing interest rates. Haddad does not oppose ending the recessive phase. Haddad does not oppose reducing interest rates either, but believes there is no way of making the measures viable in the short term like the president wants.

Either the minister changes his opinion or he will be out of the government. Itamar Franco is reviewing the appropriateness of reshuffling the cabinet after Collor is definitely removed. The planning minister would be one of the cabinet purge candidates.

To replace [former Economy Minister] Gustavo Krause, the president wants to choose someone who is attuned to his beliefs. This means the future economy minister will not be someone who thinks like Haddad. Consequently, in order to prevent conflict between the Economy and Planning Ministries, it would be indispensable to replace Haddad.

The president's erratic behavior encourages economic experts to suspect that he is not completely against economic unorthodoxy. The economic team's projections indicate that there will be an inflationary resurgence within the next two months, partly due to the actions and remarks by the president, who is unresponsive to financial market changes.

Ministerial circles believe, because of growing inflation rates, Itamar Franco would not refuse the drawing up of an economic package.

From his exile at Dinda [his private residence in Brasilia], with few hopes of returning to resume his duties, Fernando Collor de Mello begins to satirize Itamar. After learning of Krause's departure, Collor ran to his lap-top [preceding word in English] Toshiba 1200. Upon learning the news of an agency linked to the [financial] market, Collor said: "Dollar speculation is increasing and Brazilian notes abroad are declining." Collor added: "This is too much turmoil."

The suspended president made some comments on the economists who have been visiting Itamar's office frequently during the past few days. Collor said: "Dercio Munhoz is good for academic discussions, but is unable to implement anything. Paulo Nogueira Batista will be poorly received abroad. It will be a setback."

Franco Plans To Merge Planning, Finance Ministries

PY2012012192 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 19 Dec 92 p 32

[Article by Cassia Maria and Monica Gugliano from Brasilia]

[Text] President Itamar Franco will merge the Finance and Planning Ministries after the Senate vote on suspended President Fernando Collor's impeachment. Franco already has decided that the new ministry will be entrusted to Paulo Haddad, who has been holding both posts since Krause's resignation from the Finance Ministry. On 17 December, Haddad was told he will take over the new Finance and Planning Ministry after the Senate votes on Fernando Collor's impeachment.

Thus, Itamar Franco will have reinstituted the Collor administration's defunct Economy Ministry. After Collor was suspended, the Economy Ministry was broken up into Finance and Planning, which seem to have survived barely 76 days. The other ministers have received Franco's proposal favorably. Even Justice Minister Mauricio Correa, who had criticized the Haddad-Krause team's economic policy, has joined the majority that supports Haddad's appointment to head the new ministry.

The planning minister gained strength with Krause's resignation despite the rumors about his loss of power and possible replacement that palace advisers have been spreading. In his talks with other ministers, Franco praised the way in which Haddad had handled the crisis and the professional ease with which he conducted the talks with industrialists and economists, talks that Krause had criticized.

"Haddad fulfilled the commitment to govern he had undertaken as a citizen of Minas Gerais," according to an adviser.

The new ministry, however, will not have as much power as the former Economy Ministry. The industrial and foreign trade policies are no longer under the economic team's jurisdiction because they are in the hands of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Neither will it have control over the salary policy, which has been entrusted to the Labor Ministry.

Congress To Vote on Fiscal Adjustment in January

PY2012022392 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 17 Dec 92 Section 1 p 12

[Excerpt] The president of the Republic, Itamar Franco, will convene a special session of Congress in January to vote on the fiscal adjustment.

The government bloc leader in the Chamber of Deputies, Roberto Freire (PPS-PE) [People's Socialist Party-Pernambuco State], told FOLHA DE SAO PAULO that Congress will be convened because there is no chance of voting on the fiscal adjustment this year.

Freire said he raised this problem with the president of the Republic and an agreement was reached to convene a special session of Congress for January 1993.

This delay in the fiscal adjustment's approval will make negotiations between Brazil and the IMF difficult. The economic team intended to begin negotiations with the IMF after achieving the approval of the fiscal adjustment.

Roberto Freire said he discussed with President Itamar Franco the problem he would confront in still getting the fiscal adjustment approved this year due to the resistance that some congressmen are making to the government's bill. Freire believed it was better to guarantee the approval of the government's bill changing the IRPJ (Corporation Tax Revenue).

Freire said: "The approval of this bill will represent a significant collection gain that will almost be equivalent to the fiscal adjustment." The IRPJ bill must be voted on today in the Chamber of Deputies plenary through an agreement among party leaderships. The IRPJ should yield $5.3 billion in revenues for the federal government, the states, and the municipalities in 1993 as the income tax revenues are divided among the three levels of government.

Deputy Francisco Dornelles (PFL-RJ) [Liberal Front Party-Rio de Janeiro State] believes the government's fiscal adjustment bill creating the IPMF (provisional tax on financial operations), the CVA (value added tax), and the Selective Tax will hardly be approved in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate the way it is now in Deputy Benito Gama's (PFL-BA) [PFL-Bahia State] alternative bill. Gama is the adjustment bill's sponsor.

Economy Minister Gustavo Krause's resignation may be another factor complicating the fiscal adjustment's approval in January 1993. Some Chamber of Deputies Economy Committee members believe the new economy minister may want to change some points in the fiscal reform bill. [passage omitted]

Senator Sees Collor's Chances To Return Improving

PY2112014992 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 19 Dec 92 p 5

[Interview with Minas Gerais PMDB, Brazilian Democratic Movement Party, Senator Alfredo Campos by Nubia Ferro; place and date not given]

[Text] [Ferro] Who proposed that you change your vote? Was it the removed president?

[Campos] No. I never talked with him. A senator talked to me on 16 December, and eight others on 17 December.

[Ferro] What did they promise you?

[Campos] They told me that if they managed to make President Collor return, all those who supported him will have all the federal posts they want in their states.

[Ferro] Why do you think they made that proposal to you?

[Campos] I think it was because the designation of Jose Aparecido to the Brazilian Embassy in Lisbon was almost defeated. I believe they thought I would like to stay in the government.

[Ferro] Did the PMDB complain about your criticism of the Franco government?

[Campos] If they do that, they will have to do the same thing with the other 80 senators, because not a single senator is satisfied with Franco. That is the danger.

[Ferro] Can there still be a surprise at the trial?

[Campos] There are many chances. If the decision is made next year, a surprise is very likely. I believe some 16 senators now are in favor of Collor's return.

Poll Shows 60 Percent Trust President Franco

PY1812233892 Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network in Portuguese 2100 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] According to a poll by the IBOPE [Brazilian Public Opinion and Statistics Institute], 60 percent of the Brazilian people trust interim President Itamar Franco.

Most of the population, however, think Itamar must show more concern for the country's everyday problems. The IBOPE poll was carried out from October to December in the main Brazilian capitals. The poll was requested by the National Confederation of Industries [CNI], and the result was given this week to President Itamar Franco by CNI President Senator Albano Franco.

For the question, do you trust the interim president: Among those questioned 60 percent answered yes, 27 percent answered no, and 13 percent did not answer. National problems versus everyday problems: In the IBOPE poll, 75 percent of the population thinks the president should be more concerned about solving everyday problems, 19 percent think the president should be more concerned about solving national problems, and 5 percent did not answer.

The IBOPE poll also asked people to evaluate the Itamar Franco administration: 10 percent think it is terrible, 15 percent did not answer, 28 percent think it is very good, and 47 percent think President Itamar Franco's administration is average.

Chile

Interior Minister Krauss Criticizes Argentine Tax

PY2012023192 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Imagen Internacional in Spanish 2330 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] Interior Minister Enrique Krauss today criticized the increase in custom taxes that Argentina announced recently. He did so after dedicating the new facilities at Los Libertadores crossing on the Argentine border.

[Begin recording] [reporter Jose Miguel Alfaro from Los Libertadores] Los Libertadores crossing has growing importance for Chilean-Argentine trade: 1 million metric tons of various products go through it every year and approximately 1,000 vehicles cross the border at this point every day. In keeping with its plan to improve customs facilities, the Chilean Government has allocated more than 440 million pesos to refurbish the crossing facilities.

The dedication ceremony was attended by many Chilean Government officials, headed by Interior Minister Enrique Krauss. Argentine Interior Minister Gustavo Beliz was also expected but did not arrive.

After the ceremony was over, Minister Krauss was asked about Argentina's decision to increase the statistics customs tax from 3 to 10 percent. This is what he said:

[Krauss] Unfortunately, facts do not show concrete intentions to go ahead with the integration. These buildings you see today do evince such intentions. To provide these facilities that will allow people and goods from both countries to cross the border with ease is the right attitude. The one you are talking about is undoubtedly disturbing, and I would like to say that integration can be achieved only when the two countries' economies are in harmony.

[Alfaro] Next year Chile will spend more than 160 million pesos on additional facilities in Los Libertadores. [end recording]

Foreign Minister Signs Agreements With Jamaica

PY1912115492 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 5 Dec 92 p C7

[Text] The elimination of tourist visas was one of the three agreements signed yesterday by the foreign ministers of Chile, Enrique Silva Cimma, and Jamaica, David Coore.

The ceremony, during which a joint declaration was signed by President Patricio Aylwin and Prime Minister Percival Patterson, was held at noon yesterday in the Foreign Ministry's Red Hall.

The agreements are intended to implement, first, an "Act of Understanding" which establishes the technical and scientific cooperation program the two countries will develop between 1993 and 1994.

The second agreement provides for tourism cooperation, by which the two governments promise to promote and facilitate tourism between Chile and Jamaica.

The exchange of diplomatic notes between the foreign ministers also looks for similar objectives, formalizing the elimination of tourist visas between the two countries.

Moreover, on the special orders of Chilean President Patricio Aylwin and Jamaican Prime Minister Percival Patterson, the respective foreign ministers signed a joint Chilean-Jamaican declaration in which they stressed "the importance of the exchange of visits among officials of the two countries to strengthen and supplement the different aspects of economic, political, and commercial relations."

The Jamaican prime minister said that in that context, President Aylwin will visit Jamaica next year, and Patterson will again visit Chile in October 1993 to participate in the Rio Group meeting which will be held in our country.

The agreements signed provides—in the scientific and technical cooperation area—the supply by Chile to Jamaica of technical assistance in handling water resources, in the field of agriculture, and in developing fishing techniques.

Jamaica will provide to our country training in the handling of tourism and cooperation with the possibility of detecting future natural disasters through a supercomputer that helps outline geological programs that will help identify seismic zones or microzones, electrical storms, and critical situations.

In the tourism field, the elimination of visas will allow visitors from the two countries to remain in each country for up to 90 days, with no visas, in this manner promoting tourism between the two countries.

Moreover, the Jamaican prime minister said that there is interest in promoting greater exchanges in culture and among university students, with the purpose of enhancing the cultural level in the two countries.

Pinochet Defends Military Courts Against Criticism

PY1812200892 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] Army Commander General Augusto Pinochet stated that those who criticize military courts want to get rid of them despite the fact that they have existed since the Roman Empire.

Pinochet made this comment after asserting that this has been a good year, free of problems, and he hoped that next year will be better than last year, the year before last, or three years ago.

When asked his opinion on the fact that some believe that the tapping of telephones was an intelligence operation, Pinochet answered in a less sarcastic tone of voice:

[Begin recording] I want to make something clear. People should understand what intelligence means. It is one thing to read information and another to use it. Goodbye. [end recording]

When asked whether he is willing to resign as Army commander to run for the presidency of the Republic, Pinochet answered: Mind your own business. Pinochet made this comment at La Moneda after participating in a work luncheon headed by President Patricio Aylwin.

Admits Officers Involved in Phone Tapping

PY1812201292 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 17 Dec 92

[Text] Army Commander General Augusto Pinochet admitted that several officers were involved in the tapping of Senator Sebastian Pinera's phone. He added that the report on the investigation conducted within the Army by Army Inspector General Guillermo Garin is secret and proposes the implementation of disciplinary measures.

[Begin Pinochet recording] Our report is secret and proposes the implementation of disciplinary measures. That is all. I am leaving now.

[Unidentified reporter] [question indistinct]

[Pinochet] There are several. [end recording]

Pinochet made this comment in response to inquiries about the investigations conducted within the Telecommunications Command. The corresponding report was delivered to President Patricio Aylwin and Defense Minister Patricio Rojas.

In this regard, Minister Rojas admitted that he is studying the report but declined comment on its contents.

Pinochet and Rojas referred to this issue at the end of the graduation ceremony headed by President Aylwin for War College students at the Military School.

Previous Remarks Misinterpreted

PY1912020192 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Imagen Internacional in Spanish 2330 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] The Chilean Army has explained that the internal investigation into the phone-tapping affair does not show that people other than those already known to all are involved. General Pinochet said his remarks on the subject on 17 December were misinterpreted.

The Army issued a communique denying that General Pinochet stated on 17 December that several officers are involved in the phone-tapping affair. The communique explained that the Army commander in chief was misinterpreted because of the confusion prevailing after a graduation ceremony at the Military School.

Today in Valparaiso, Chilean Defense Minister Patricio Rojas backed up the Army.

[Begin recording] Everything is pretty clear, as far as I am concerned. What probably happened is that his words were misinterpreted. All I can do is reiterate what I said yesterday. Nobody else has been involved in these crimes. Administrative measures have been taken and the investigation is now in the hands of the military prosecutor. [end recording]

Army Commander-in-Chief Augusto Pinochet reaffirmed his branch's denial and talked about Admiral Jose Toribio Merino's recent remarks.

[Begin recording] [Pinochet] It is either an editing mistake or a misinterpretation. I said: There are several. What I meant is that several disciplinary measures have been taken.

[Unidentified reporter] Admiral Merino said today that you are too old to run for president of the nation.

[Pinochet] He is the old one because he is older than I am. [Laughter] [end recording]

Justices Charged With Violating Constitution

PY1812234692 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] A congressional official today officially notified Supreme Court Justices Hernan Cereceda, Lionel Beraud, and German Valenzuela Erazo of the charges of violating the Constitution brought against them by 10 congressmen from the Coalition of Parties for Democracy.

This procedure was carried out this morning at the Judicial Palace just before the justices joined the Supreme Court plenum. Yesterday, Army Auditor General Fernando Torres Silva also was notified of this action taken by the congressmen.

It is appropriate to recall that these justices were members of the third Supreme Court chamber when that court decided that the kidnapping case of MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left] leader Alfonso Chanfreau should be investigated by the military court. At that time, the majority votes were cast by Hernan Cereceda, Lionel Beraud, German Valenzuela Erazo, and Fernando Torres Silva.

This action is also related to a pending ruling on the kidnapping case of Commander Carlos Carreno, in which political prisoner Max Diaz Trujillo is reportedly involved. Upon being notified, the justices have a period of 10 working days to submit their answer to the charge.

The committee in charge of investigating this case is made up of Deputies Baldemar Carrasco, Guillermo Yunge, Juan Martinez, Jorge Ulloa, and Jorge Morales. The congressmen also are given a period of 16 days to decide whether the charge of violating the Constitution is valid.

Interview With Deputy Matthei on RN Party Ruling

PY1812212992 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] National Renewal Party [RN] Deputy Evelyn Matthei was interviewed by Radio Chilena about the RN Supreme Court's ruling and the future of her political career. The exclusive interview was granted to journalist Rosa Alcayaga.

[Begin recording] [Alcayaga] Deputy Evelyn Matthei, I would like to know how you feel after learning of the RN Supreme Court's ruling suspending you for 10 years. What can you tell us about this decision?

[Matthei] I am very calm; I am sound, serene; I don't begrudge anybody. I, obviously, admit having made a mistake. I have carefully assessed the court ruling, however, and I believe it is extremely exaggerated. I remained silent during the past 40 days because I really believed it was best for the party, for all, but I am now writing a public statement that I will disclose in the next few days once it is ready.

What is really comforting is the fact that the people believe, and so do I, that the ruling is extremely exaggerated. I have constantly received expressions of support and encouragement from various people, for which I am very grateful.

[Alcayaga] Evelyn, do you think the RN will disintegrate or split up?

[Matthei] I hope not. I wish to point out, however, that the party has been enduring problems for some time now. I am under the impression that some people believe that by punishing me in such a drastic manner and somehow putting all the blame on me they would solve the party's problems. I do not think this is correct because I am not responsible for the party's problems.

[Alcayaga] What about your political career?

[Matthei] I am not worried about that right now. I think people know that I do not regard my political activities as a career. I am really not interested in posts nor in seats in Congress. Throughout my short experience in politics I have mainly focused on the people's concrete problems. You have never seen me, except for now unfortunately, involved in political problems. I have never worried about what electoral system would be used but rather about the price of electricity, of potable water, in sum, about concrete issues that concern the people. I still have one year ahead of me as deputy and will continue to devote my mandate to these problems. We will see about the rest later on.

[Alcayaga] What about Francisco Ignacio Ossa's statement accusing Andres Allamand and Sebastian Pineira of trying to control the party?

[Matthei] I will address that issue too.

[Alcayaga] Are you serene at this moment?

[Matthei] I am very, very distressed; I am very upset. The truth is that I have been so for the past 4 and ½ months. As you know, I had never told a lie before, never, quite the contrary. I have always stood out for my honesty. I remained silent for reasons I will opportunely disclose. I thought it would be better to remain silent but, in the long run, it was worse. But I had no malicious intention nor sought to do anybody any harm; I was just trying to protect other people. All this has had a brutal boomerang effect against me. It has gotten out of hand, and I am very upset, really very upset. I engaged in politics with the purpose of serving, and I feel I am trapped in this horrible incident and am truly upset. Fortunately my family, all my friends, many people have helped me, but it is still very rough.

[Alcayaga] After this statement Evelyn Matthei refused to continue talking. She said she had promised to remain silent during the next few days until she feels better and releases a public statement. [end recording]

Colombia

Cartel Chief Escobar To Surrender 'Any Time'

PA1912174592 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1700 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] The "NTC" newscast learned on 19 December Pablo Escobar Gaviria is reportedly going to turn himself in to the Antioquia Department regional prosecutor's office. The Medellin Cartel chief, who has come close to being captured by the elite police on three occasions, announced through his lawyers he intends to turn himself in. Here is Adriana Villamarin, from Medellin:

[Villamarin] All of Medellin's security forces went on alert, as they are expecting the surrender of drug trafficker Pablo Escobar Gaviria at any time. Deputy Prosecutor General Francisco Jose Cinturas is here in Medellin making the arrangements for the drug trafficker to surrender to Colombian justice. Since this morning, Cinturas has been holding a closed-door meeting at the Medellin mayor's office with Antoquia Governor Juan Gomez Martinez, Senator Diego Uribe Velez, Medellin Mayor Luis Alfredo Ramos, General Jairo Antonio Rodriguez, the Medellin metropolitan police commmander, and the Antioquia regional prosecutor.

It was also reported recently that security measures were reinforced at the Itagui jail, where Escobar Gaviria would be taken. His surrender seems imminent.

Government Denies 'Rumors'

PA2012015992 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0030 GMT 20 Dec 92

[Text] The government and the Prosecutor General's Office on 19 December denied rumors that Pablo Escobar would surrender soon. In addition, security organizations have reiterated that they are continuing operations to capture Escobar.

Prosecutor General Gustavo de Greiff stated on 19 December that if Pablo Escobar wants to surrender to Colombia's justice, he must do so unconditionally. There will be no arrangements or previous talks with him to get him to return to prison, De Greiff added. Thus, the prosecutor general has categorically denied rumors that the drug trafficker has been holding talks with the government to surrender soon.

[Begin De Greiff recording] All I can tell you is that there have been no talks and no one has approached the Prosecutor General's Office or the government. I know this because I had a meeting with the president today. [end recording]

De Greiff also denied that Deputy Prosecutor General Francisco Jose Cinturas is in the Antioquia Department capital making arrangements for the Medellin Cartel chief's return to prison.

[Begin De Greiff recording] That is not true, either. Dr. Cinturas met with me today. We discussed the whole situation and it is just as I have told you. [end recording]

The government has also denied rumors of an imminent surrender by Escobar. After noting the policy for those who surrender to justice is still in effect, the government again urged the drug trafficker to surrender to justice.

[Begin recording Government Minister Humberto de la Calle] Individuals involved in this type of crime who are thinking about surrendering to justice and to the decisions of prosecutors and judges have the right to do so. Those are actions that the law envisages and that the government will continue to respect. [end recording]

The truth is that both the prosecutor general and the government minister have insisted that there has been no contact with Pablo Escobar and that state's special forces are trying to capture him.

Car Bomb Kills Medellin Police Commander

PA1912175792 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1700 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Report by Medellin correspondent Lidia Maria Vanegas]

[Text] A bomb containing 20 kg of dynamite ended the life of Fernando Posada Hoyos, metropolitan area intelligence chief of the Dijin [Judicial Police and Investigations Directorate], when it exploded at the door of his house in the Laureles residential sector in western Medellin. Neighbors said that more than 20 vehicles carrying hooded and heavily armed men arrived at approximately 0330. They exchanged gunfire with a patrol that arrived to inspect the bomb site after the bomb exploded. An NCO and four policemen were wounded in the clash. Security forces believe the vehicles used by the assailants were stolen in Medellin this week.

At approximately the same time the bomb exploded in Laureles, three vehicles arrived with hooded men at a house located near the residence where Tyson [Medellin Cartel leader Brances Munoz Mosquera] was killed. After opening fire with AR-15's and sub-machine guns, they set off a bomb containing 10 kg of dynamite. Nevertheless, the bomb miraculously did not explode. The attack is believed to be in reprisal for information provided to the police by local residents, which led to the killing of Pablo Escobar's associate.

Police Report Bomb Attack at Cali Hotel

PA1912161592 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1538 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Excerpt] Cali, Valle del Cauca Department, 19 Dec (DPA)—Authorities reported on 19 December that a terrorist attack on the Torre de Cali Hotel, one of the most luxurious hotels in this southwestern city, caused heavy material damage but no casualties.

According to the police, several men drove up to the hotel in a private car, the license plate of which has not yet been established, and left a bomb outside the building. The shock wave shattered all the windows in the hotel, housed in one of the city's highest buildings, and caused property damage to nearby buildings.

The motive for the terrorist attack and the perpetrators are not yet known, although the authorities think this may be the work of the Simon Bolivar National Guerrilla Coordinating Board, since in the past few weeks it began an escalation of violence that has already claimed a high number of victims and caused damages in the millions. [passage omitted]

Escobar Associates Rebel at Maximum Security Prison

PA2012004092 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1700 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] Three days after the incident occurred, it was reported that Pablo Escobar's associates rebelled and destroyed security facilities in Itagui prison. The inmates' rebellion in the maximum security prison began when they realized they had been separated from one another and that walls 60 cm thick divided the penitentiary's wings. The situation exploded this week when several of the prisoners began to destroy the prison's security systems with a mallet. No one seems to know how the mallet was smuggled in. The inmates broke several electronic cell locks. The specially trained guards reacted too late.

The incident is serious, because it confirms that the prison holding several of Colombia's most dangerous criminals is vulnerable. The guards are either insufficiently vigilant or they are afraid of the prisoners. So far no disciplinary actions have been taken against the riotous inmates.

[Begin Justice Minister Andres Gonzalez recording] The investigation is about to conclude. All persons involved will be punished. [end recording]

Although only one inmate has been held responsible for destroying the facilities, Escobar's 12 close associates, including his brother Roberto, participated in the uprising.

DAS Director Says Guerrillas Protecting Escobar

PA1812223492 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1630 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Report by Marcela Duran]

[Text] Administrative Department of Security [DAS] Director Fernando Brito reported that Pablo Escobar is being protected by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia people's militia in Medellin. For security reasons Escobar moves around with only five men accompanying him. Because of this, he has decided to contract the services of the people's militia to patrol the areas where he goes. Likewise, persecution by his enemies, the Galeanos and the Moncadas, has forced him to employ strangers to carry out attacks and allow him to move around without so many problems.

[Begin recording] [Brito] It is feasible that there is some sort of alliance or agreement between Pablo Escobar and the militia.

[Duran] What for specifically?

[Brito] It could be to provide him some sort of security in certain areas where the people's militia has greater mobility and influence. [end recording]

According to DAS information, Escobar has been unable to leave the Valle de Aburra area, and cannot go to Middle Magdalena, his traditional hiding place. Ramon Isza's paramilitary group, which is being paid by the Cali Cartel, has Escobar's route cut off. The DAS director said the guerrillas are expected to step up their terrorist activities during the rest of December.

[Begin Brito recording] They insist that they will continue their terrorist activities. We believe they will try to focus their attacks against state institutions, public forces, and security organizations facilities. All necessary precautionary measures are being taken. [end recording]

ELN Leader Transferred to New Prison in Bogota

PA1812213592 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1630 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Report by Marcela Duran]

[Text] On 18 December, fifteen days after he was arrested in Bucaramanga, Francisco Galan, leader of the National Army of Liberation [ELN], is being transferred to the Modelo Prison in Santa Fe de Bogota from the Administrative Department of Security [DAS] installation where he was being held.

Although a long motorcade was expected, only three vehicles follow the station wagon which carries the ELN's third most important man. As the station wagon advances, something unexpected happens. A cargo truck unloading piles of papers at the DAS basement blocks the way. The bodyguards are nervous.

This is exclusive footage by the "National Newscast." Finally, the truck is forced to clear the way and the motorcade rapidly speeds away. Not to attract the people's attention, the motorcade is minimal.

Galan will be confined in a maximum security cell at the Modelo Prison. For several days, work was performed to reinforce the prison walls. The bars were replaced with iron bars.

Beginning 18 December, Francisco Galan, the ELN's third most important man, will stay in the Modelo Prison in Santa Fe de Bogota.

Army, FARC Engage in 'Heavy Combat' in Meta

PA2112024192 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0030 GMT 21 Dec 92

[Text] Mobile Brigade No. 1 troops and members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia's [FARC] 43rd Front are engaged in heavy combat in the Mesetas area in Meta Department. So far three rebels are dead, 15 have been wounded, and five have deserted and are currently in the custody of the Villavicencio prosecutor's office. Here is General Jorge Enrique Mora, commander of Mobile Brigade No. 1:

[Begin Mora recording] The FARC left behind all their military kits. So far 40 kits have been recovered with all their supplies, explosives, and so forth. The men involved, approximately 60 guerrillas, are currently fleeing in disarray. The brigade is continuing its operations and we expect greater victories in the next few days. [end recording]

An operation is being launched against a 60-man rebel column that is apparently made up of members of the FARC Secretariat's security corps. The Mobile Brigade seized 23 carbines, seven rifles, 12 shotguns, explosives—including some TNT, some homemade explosive mines, and grenades—and 1.5 kg of cocaine.

The five rebels—among them two women—who surrendered to the authorities told this newscast that there are desperate individuals among the subversives as they are only eating rice with yucca every three days while the Army is closing in every day. Helicopter gunships and Armed Forces' airplanes continued to conduct combing operations throughout the area this afternoon.

Police Rescue Kidnapped U.S. Child

PA1912191792 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1620 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] Medellin, Antioquia Department, 19 Dec (EFE)—Agents of the Anti-Extortion and Kidnapping Unit [Unase] on 19 December rescued, safe and sound, kidnapping victim John Gregroy, 6, in a rural area in the country's northeastern zone and arrested six persons, the authorities reported.

The rescue took place in an area known as "Partida de Platanillal," near the town of Concordia, southwest of Medellin.

Gregory, the son of an American father and a Colombian mother, had recently recently arrived in Colombia for the holidays. The kidnappers had asked his family for a $1 million ransom.

On 18 December, another Unase unit rescued five members of a family who were held hostage in their own home by three criminals. The police killed the kidnappers in the operation.

Ecuador

Peruvian President Fujimori Arrives for Visit

PA1812235292 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 2200 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori arrived in Ecuador on 18 December for a private visit that will last a little more than one day to improve the friendly relations between the two countries.

The visit intends to cement the friendship between the two presidents and between the Peruvian and Ecuadoran peoples through direct contacts, Fujimori said just prior to departing Lima aboard a military transport plane.

In his third visit to Ecuador, Fujimori is accompanied by his family and Foreign Minister Oscar de la Puente Raygada. Fujimori visited Quito in January and returned in August to attend President Sixto Duran-Ballen's inauguration ceremony.

Defense Minister Denies Weapons Came From Ecuador

PA1812044792 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 2200 GMT 17 Dec 92

[Text] Defense Minister General Jose Gallardo said on 17 December that the high-powered weapons intended for the Colombian guerrillas that, according to information from Sante Fe de Bogota, arrived in that country from Ecuador, do not belong to nor are they similar to those used by the Ecuadoran Armed Forces.

General Gallardo said the type of rifles and ammunition seized in Colombia are not used by the Ecuadoran Armed Forces. He said the Colombian border is very extensive, and it is not certain whether the weapons entered Colombia from Ecuador or from Tumaco, a Colombian port.

Congress Passes Bill Reorganizing Justice System

PA1812165092 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 1100 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] In a second and final debate held on 17 December, Congress approved the constitutional reforms that will reorganize the administration of justice in the country. The plenum approved substantial portions of the bill proposed by the Special Commission on Constitutional Affairs, but made slight changes that do not affect the essence of the document.

The law eliminates fiscal courts and courts of administrative disputes, modifies the structure and duties of the Constitutional Guarantees Court, and turns the Supreme Court into a court of appeals.

Congress will send this law to the Executive Branch in the next few hours. According to the deputies, it is almost certain that President Sixto Duran-Ballen will sign the document.

Paraguay

President Reviews 1992 Political, Economic Accomplishments

PY1912141592 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 18 Dec 92 p 5

[Text] Taking stock of the year that is about to end, President Andres Rodriguez stated yesterday that it was characterized by "lights and shades." He criticized politicians' aggressiveness while conceding that in the economic sphere, investments performance fell short of his expectations. Rodriguez made this statement when addressing foreign diplomats at Government House to present their Christmas greetings to him.

Rodriguez, whose term in office will end in eight months, said that "the year that is slipping by was one marked by lights and shades. Politically, our democratic system has been consolidated, although at the same time there was tremendous and uncalled-for aggressiveness in political campaigns for primary elections."

Rodriguez added that "in the international sphere, relations between my country and yours are excellent. There are strong ties of friendship and solidarity with Paraguay and its government. In the economic sphere, there was economic growth and there were investments, albeit insufficient, but adverse weather conditions and tumbling prices on the international market stunted our production."

He further stated that in the social sphere many achievements were accomplished, such as "more advantageous laws, progress in medical services and education, and the building and allotment of housing developments, but there was frustration for not having been able to do more."

Rodriguez pointed out that "next year will lavish on us hope and uncertainty alike. It will also be an historical year in which a democratically elected president will hand over power to another democratically elected president. Our democratic system will thus be consolidated."

Rodriguez underscored the fact that "we, who nearly four years ago proclaimed the establishment of a democratic system and respect for human rights; we, who were entrusted with the duty to conduct the transition process, will be handing over the torch. Others will come, to pick it up—the beacon of peace, justice, and democracy, hand-in-hand with development."

Poll Shows Growing Support for National Encounter

PY1812202592 Asuncion TIEMPO 14 in Spanish 16 Dec 92 p 10

[Text] Should the two main opposition groups—the PLRA [Authentic Radical Liberal Party] and the National Encounter—join forces, Dr. Guillermo Caballero Vargas of the National Encounter will be the ideal presidential candidate for most people who do not belong to the Colorado Party, according to the most recent poll conducted by TIEMPO 14. More than 60 percent of those surveyed felt that Caballero Vargas should be the presidential candidate for the coalition, and just over 33 percent of the people surveyed prefered Laino.

The 1993 presidential elections could well give us a surprise. One thing is certain, however: If the main opposition forces come together the Colorado Party will not have a chance. An earlier poll conducted by Radio Nanduti and TIEMPO 14 clearly showed that should the two main opposition forces unite they will have 53 percent of the votes, while the Colorado Party, even if its various factions were to join forces after the primaries, will obtain only 46 percent.

In view of these results, TIEMPO 14 conducted another poll to learn from potential voters "who would be their presidential candidate should the PLRA and the National Encounter reach an agreement."

The results showed a clear preference for National Encounter candidate Caballero Vargas, with PLRA's Domingo Laino in second place. The poll was conducted mainly in the capital, although it included people who live in the outskirts of the metropolitan area. A total of 992 people were surveyed. The pollsters surveyed potential voters of both sexes, varying ages, and from different social strata who live in greater and downtown Asuncion.

Over 60 percent of those surveyed prefer Guillermo Caballero Vargas as the presidential candidate for the coalition should it materialize.

According to the poll, Caballero Vargas has a 25 percent advantage over Domingo Laino, who obtained just over 33 percent of the votes.

By joining forces the opposition, especially the two groups led by Laino and Caballero Vargas, will secure access to power in 1993 after 50 years away from Government House.

This coalition—which although farfetched is not impossible—would require self-sacrifices on both sides. It remains to be seen whether they are willing to make them.

The poll focused exclusively on the presidential preferences of people who do not belong to the Colorado Party should the opposition coalition materialize.

Only Paraguayan citizens old enough to vote who do not belong to the Colorado Party were surveyed, without taking into account whether they belong to another party.

Sixty percent of the people polled were males, 596 out of 992. The remaining 40 percent, that is, 396 people were women.

The male majority is due to the fact that the survey was conducted at the Defensores del Chaco soccer stadium where most of the audience is male. The survey also included popular downtown restaurants, concert venues, and supermarkets.

Most of those surveyed were young people between 18 and 45 years old.

One remarkable result of the survey is that young people between 18 and 25 years of age would vote for Guillermo Caballero Vargas. Nearly 70 percent of those in this age bracket were in favor of the National Encounter hopeful.

Even though the survey lacks scientific accuracy it shows a trend and proves the fact that the National Encounter continues to attract supporters at the expense of Paraguay's traditional political parties.

Peru

Gunmen Kill Labor Leader Following 17 Dec Protests

PA1812173992 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1615 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Excerpts] Lima, 18 Dec (NOTIMEX)—Pedro Huillca Tecse, secretary general of the largest Peruvian labor organization, was killed today in an attack perpetrated by unidentified armed men, labor sources reported on 18 December. Huillca Tecse, 45, militant of the Communist Party of Peru, was intercepted by three armed men and a woman when he was leaving his home in Los Olivos District, 16 km north of Lima. He was accompanied by his son. The attackers used an FAL machine gun on Huillca Tecse, leader of the General Confederation of Peruvian Workers (CGTP), who was rushed to a local hospital, where doctors declared him dead. A spokesman of the "Cayetano Heredia" Hospital said Huillca Tecse's son, Julio Cesar, 16, who was shot in the neck, is in serious condition. CGTP leaders have accused government forces of the murder, while the police have blamed Shining Path members for the crime. [passage omitted]

Huillca Tecse's murder occurred one day after the CGTP carried out a demonstration in Lima against the president's labor and economic policies, as well as to reject the privatization of public enterprises.

President Accuses Shining Path

PA1812191092 Lima Radio Programas del Peru Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] In another condemnable action, terrorists killed Pedro Huillca Tecse, secretary general of the General Confederation of Peruvian Workers, CGTP, and former civil construction leader.

Four men and one woman attacked Huillca and his 18-year-old son Julio Cesar at the entrance to their residence in Los Olivos.

Huillca was taken to the Cayetano Heredia Hospital, while still alive, by his relatives. His son, who underwent surgery, is in critical condition.

President Alberto Fujimori condemned the murder blaming Shining Path terrorists and said investigations will be conducted until those responsible are apprehended. The Shining Path continues to be one of the main violators of human rights, Fujimori said before departing for Ecuador on an unofficial two-day visit.

CGTP President Valentin Pacho condemned the crime at the central morgue in Lima, where Huillca's body was transferred, and urged workers to continue defending a just cause.

CGTP Assistant Secretary General Teodulo Hernandez, who will succeed Huillca Tecse, demanded a thorough investigation and punishment for the authors of the crime. He said the CGTP will organize a march to protest and reject the demented action carried out by Shining Path guerrillas.

Huillca's body will be transferred to the Civil Construction and CGTP headquarters. Funeral services will be held on the morning of 20 December. The funeral procession will depart from the Dos de Mayo Plaza, in downtown Lima.

National Election Board Announces CCD Winners

PA1912033192 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0029 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] In a public session, the National Election Board [JNE] announced the names of the 80 Democratic Constituent Congress [CCD] members elected on 22 November. The new CCD members will receive their credentials on 19 December.

The session was not attended by any of the heads of the 10 lists that won representative seats in the CCD. With the attendance of all JNE members and 27 days after the elections, on the afternoon of 18 December the JNE, presided over by Cesar Pollack Romero, announced the official results.

The Change 90/New Majority Movement coalition got 44 seats and 49.30 percent; Popular Christian Party, eight seats and 9.73 percent; Independent Moralization Front, seven seats and 7.81 percent; Independent Renewal Movement, six seats and 7.6 percent; Left-Wing Democratic Movement, four seats and 5.48 percent; Democratic Coordination, four seats and 5.26 percent; National Front of Workers and Peasants, three seats and 3.82 percent; Peruvian Popular Agrarian Front, two seats and 2.77 percent; Solidarity and Democracy, one seat and 2.3 percent; and the Agrarian Independent Movement, one seat and 1.72 percent.

The 80 CCD members will receive their credentials at this same building on 19 December.

Legislature Reopens To Install New Congress

PA2112000392 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2105 GMT 20 Dec 92

[Excerpt] Lima, 20 Dec (NOTIMEX)—The Peruvian legislature reopened its doors on 20 December to install the Constituent Congress Preparatory Board, marking a step toward the return to institutional democracy in the nation.

The reopening ceremony of the legislative branch took place in the Chamber of Deputies and was attended by the 80 new congressmen who represent 10 political parties and independent movements that participated in the 22 November elections.

The Preparatory Board, the duties of which will conclude on 30 December when the so-called Democratic Constituent Congress [CCD] will be formally installed, swore in the legislators.

Jaime Yoshiyama, leader of the government coalition "New Majority-Change 90," took over as chairman of the board after being sworn in by Luz Salgado, also from the ruling faction, as she came in second in the number of votes obtained by a congressperson.

A multiparty board of directors shall be established subsequently to draw up the internal rules that will guide the congress' actions.

Yoshiyama—undoubtedly the CCD president—assured today that the new rules will give priority to the legislative body's work over legislative rhetoric.

He asked congressmen to put aside "the climate of hostilities" and take up the struggle against hunger, poverty, corruption, drug trafficking, and terrorism. [passage omitted]

Government Extends State of Emergency for 60 Days

PA1912193092 Paris AFP in Spanish 1906 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] Lima, 19 Dec (AFP)—It was officially announced on 19 December that the government has extended for 60 days the state of emergency in provinces of eight of Peru's 25 departments because "terrorist and narco-terrorist actions" continue in those areas.

The emergency measure, which is established in a decree published in the official newspaper EL PERUANO, covers several provinces of Huanuco, San Martin, and Loreto in the Amazon jungle region.

It also includes provinces of Junin and Pasco Departments in central Peru and of Ayacucho, Huancavelica, and Puno Departments in the Andean region of southeastern Peru.

The state of emergency involves the suspension of constitutional guarantees in those areas where the Armed Forces will remain in control of the internal order.

The measure, which was established since the beginning of the "armed struggle" in Ayacucho, 575 km southeast of Lima, in 1980, is in effect over nearly 60 percent of the country's territory. According to authorities, the "armed struggle" has caused more than 25,000 victims and heavy economic damage since 1980.

Officer Linked to Coup Attempt Travels to Chile

PA2012142792 Paris AFP in Spanish 0856 GMT 20 Dec 92

[Excerpt] Lima, 20 Dec (AFP)—It was officially reported that Retired Vice Admiral Augusto Vargas Prada left on exile to Chile early on the morning of 20 December after taking refuge in the Chilean Embassy in Lima.

Vargas Prada is implicated in the thwarted coup led by retired Army generals who tried to overthrow President Alberto Fujimori on 13 November.

The vice admiral, who unlike other officers was not arrested by the authorities, is the fifth person to seek refuge abroad to avoid a trial against those responsible for the coup attempt. [passage omitted]

Fujimori Returns to Lima After Visiting Ecuador

PA2012035392 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 20 Dec 92

[Text] President Alberto Fujimori returned to Lima on the evening of 19 December after his unofficial visit to Ecuador.

President Fujimori and Ecuadoran President Sixto Duran-Ballen held a joint news conference during which they stated they will undertake all possible efforts to solve the border dispute between the two countries.

They also said they have ordered their respective foreign ministries to settle the bilateral agreements expected to be signed in Peru in 1993 when the Ecuadoran president will visit his Peruvian colleague.

During the news conference, President Alberto Fujimori referred to the terrorist violence in Peru, saying it would be regrettable if Shining Path's terrorist activities were extended to neighboring countries.

Minister on Five-Point Economic Recovery Program

PY1812201092 Lima EL PERUANO in Spanish 6 Dec 92 p A3

[Text] The economic recovery program the government will implement between 1993 and 1995 contains five basic goals.

These goals include a sustained economic growth at a reasonable rate that should reach 3.5 percent of the GDP [gross domestic product] next year and 5 percent in 1995.

The second point involves moderating our country's extreme poverty through social assistance programs. To this end, 840 million soles will be allocated next year.

The third point involves structural reforms in the economic, institutional, and social fields, especially in education, housing, and health.

The fourth point will involve curbing inflation, which, Economy Minister Carlos Bolona pointed out, must be reduced to 30 percent in 1993, 15 percent in 1994, and 10 percent in 1995. The last point involves the viability of the balance of payments, seeking to reduce the fiscal system.

Bolona championed the stabilization program implemented during the past two years and emphasized the drastic reduction of the inflation rate from about 7,600 percent per year to just 55 percent this year.

Discussing the fiscal policy, Bolona said it will be based on the general sales tax (IGV), without exemptions, and on 18-percent of the GDP. The fiscal policy also will be based on a selective consumption tax imposed on such products as gasoline, beer, and soft drinks.

Bolona also announced the removal of about 18 so-called "small" taxes. He announced a public investment reform, leaving aside the financing of large unproductive projects.

The economy minister said privatizations will be one of the main financing sources of investment. He recalled that about $200 million was collected this year in privatizations.

While lecturing during the third day of CADE [Conference of Business Executives] 92 in the city of Ica, the economy minister said: "An effort will be made to promote foreign investments." Bolona outlined the current economic situation, pointing out that the implemented policy has yielded results in various fields.

Government Creates Private Pension System

PY1812200592 Lima EL PERUANO in Spanish 7 Dec 92 p B3

[Excerpts] With the purpose of contributing to the development and strengthening of the social security system in the area of pensions, the government has created Decree Law No. 25987, which was published yesterday, the Private Pension Fund System [Sistema Privado de Fondos de Pensiones—SPP].

The system that takes over functions the 1979 Constitution granted exclusively to the state "joins" the current social security system existing in the country. It does not eliminate or replace the Peruvian Institute of Social Security (IPSS), according to the remarks made by the president of the Republic during the closing of the CADE [Annual Conference of Business Executives] 92 yesterday. [passage omitted]

The benefits for workers who join the SPP, which is in force as of today in the country, are exclusively for pensions, disablement, survival, and funeral services, and does not include health services or work accidents. The pension benefits are given to pension fund members at the age of 65.

According to Decree-Law No. 25897 published yesterday, creating the SPP, which is made up of the Private Administrators of Pension Funds [Administradoras Privadas de Fondos de Pensiones—AFP], early retirement is possible when the pension fund member wants it, as long as he is able to get a pension equal to or more than 50 percent of the average of salaries received and the income declared, appropriately updated, during the last 120 months.

To get the pension the fund member or his survivors, depending on the case, can chose programmed retirement, personal or family life income, or deferred life income.

The law says that AFP membership is voluntary for all the dependent or independent workers but they also can leave to join the IPSS within a term not exceeding two years as of the SPP's enforcement.

If the worker decides to leave the IPSS to join the SPP, he gets a "recognition bonus" issued by the IPSS for the amount of his benefits in accordance with the months of his contribution to the IPSS up to the date of this law's enforcement. The bonus will be in national currency and will maintain its constant value in accordance with the Consumer Price Index for metropolitan Lima, which is published by the INEI [National Institute of Statistics and Information Science]. The bonus has a maximum nominal value of 60,000 new soles.

The superintendency that will take over its functions immediately will carry out, in representation of the state, control over the AFP's in the way established by this law, its regulations, and other measures implemented for this purpose. The chief of the superintendency will be appointed by the president of the Republic at the Council of Ministers's nomination for a five-year term.

The law also indicates that an AFP's minimum capital is 500,000 new soles, which must be registered and fully paid at the moment of its creation. The law also says that no judge can declare the bankruptcy of an AFP without the superintendency's express consent.

Government Promulgates Energy, Mining Law

PA1812194992 Lima Radio Programas del Peru Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] The government has promulgated the energy and mines law determining the scope of this sector, its duties,

structure, top leadership, and decentralized agencies. These decentralized agencies include: the Rate Commission [Comision de Tarifas], the Peruvian Nuclear Energy Institute [Instituto Peruano de Energia Nuclear], the Geological, Mining, Metallurgic Institute [Instituto Geologico, Minero, Metalurgico], and the Mining Public Registry [Registro Publico de Mineria].

The law suspends the authority given to regional governments by the basic law on regionalization with regard to electricity, hydrocarbons, and mining, as well as on the environment.

* Composition, Agenda of New Congress Discussed

* Parties 'Regrouping'

93SM0091A Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 23 Nov 92 p 3

[Commentary by H.G.A.: "CCD: A New Political Reality"]

[Text] The first projections of Sunday's election results reveal a new political reality in Peru.

The victory of the government party, represented by the Change 90-New Majority Alliance, unquestionably reflects the persistence of an emotional trend favoring President Fujimori's government. As has been obvious in recent weeks, he has continued acting in an electoral campaign since 5 April, when the state's self-created coup destroyed the democratic system.

This should be stressed, because the insistent criticism of the so-called "traditional political parties," as well as spectacular television advertising and the collateral effects of the abortive counter-coup on 13 November, have undoubtedly helped to reinforce the slate headed by engineer Jaime Yoshiyama.

Meanwhile, although it would be absurd to deny the advantage accrued by the government party, certain significant evidence should be noted: If the volume of votes received in these elections is compared with the chief of state's popularity percentage, a difference, interesting to analyze, will be observed. Hence, from now on it may be claimed that the citizenry has not issued the government a blank check. This only confirms a common tendency among Peruvian voters, who usually make a distinction between the mandates of the executive and the legislative branch (in this case, the CCD [Democratic Constituent Congress]).

Moreover, in view of the experience that occurred between 1990 and April 1992, the conduct of the Alliance is an unknown quantity. We should not overlook the fact that, once again, engineer Fujimori is the one serving as an agglutinating figure and even (literally) as leader in charge of everything.

The latter, which ultimately could prove to be a source of governmental influence in the Congress, has become obvious throughout a campaign in which engineer Fujimori has participated in a remarkably active manner.

Based on another contribution from the initial projections, it has now been established that the other groups that will be having a major participation in the Congress, from the standpoint of both numbers and programs, are the Popular Christian Party [PPC], the Independent Front for Moralization [FIM], Renewal, and Democratic Coordination.

This list certainly indicates that the country's political forces are regrouping around new figures and proposals. The fact is that, although there may be a considerable bias in the respective percentages, because Apra [American Popular Revolutionary Alliance] and Popular Action [AP] did not participate in the elections, there is now confirmation of the citizens' tendency to separate their vote from those very parties that the government party's propaganda has been describing as "traditional."

Precisely within that spectrum, which was the predominant one in the Congress dissolved on 5 April, at the present time the only party that appears to have been strengthened is the PPC.

In the case of Popular Action, it is difficult to make an early assessment, because its supporters were left at liberty to support whomever they deemed suitable.

On the other hand, the Aprista movement has unquestionably lost strength, because its presumed "traditional captive third" of representation among the voters has not had an effect, inasmuch as the invalid vote (fostered irresponsibly by ex-President Garcia) has remained at traditional levels.

Of course, the foregoing by no means implies that the parties as such have died; but only that they have received a message regarding the urgent need to engage in severe introspection and to update their structures and programs.

This being the case, and in view of the fact that there are no viable personal projects of any kind, Change 90-New Majority now knows who its principal spokesmen will be, both when it is time for the Constituent Congress' work and at the time of legislating and monitoring.

Thinking in terms of the country, what would be positive, in principle, is the existence of a minimum common denominator for programs among the leaders of those groups: [Jaime] Yoshiyama, [Lourdes] Flores Nano, [Fernando] Olivera, [Rafael] Rey Rey, and even [Jose] Barba Caballero (circumstantially distanced from Apra), even though there are differences in emphasis. None of them are opposed to all-important things like restructuring the state to make it smaller, but at the same time more efficient. Similarly, they all agree, with slight variations, on the need to consolidate the reforms made by President Fujimori, for example, to further develop the market economy.

However, continuing to review the projections, one notes that other groups whose action has been deferred in time, such as the Marxist left, now primarily represented by the MDI [Democratic Left Movement], and the technocracy, combined in SODE [Solidarity and Democracy], have been reduced at the polls. This is symptomatic, because, on the one hand, it confirms the rejection of ideologies close to socialism, communism, and, obviously, terrorism; and, on the other, it has become clear that the citizen's vote, though less politicized than in 1990, still does not attach value to the possible contribution from strictly technical candidates.

Oddly enough, however, there are other small parties, such as Frenatraca [National Front of Workers and Peasants], the Agricultural Popular Front, etc., which, capable of reaching Congress, albeit with just one representative, could have an unpredictable participation when it is time to seek balance within the Chamber. Of course, that will have to be carefully reviewed, because it would be deplorable if we should have an experience similar to that of the Israeli Knesset (Parliament), in which the vote of some unknown rabbi is usually decisive on critical occasions.

Moreover, when reviewing the composition, particularly that of the government party's slate, we would do well to note, from the outset, that the CCD should at all times make a distinction among its functions. This is so because, for purposes of constitutional reform, given the overwhelming shortage of experts, it would be highly advisable to form a special commission responsible for making the basic proposal. In that way, the initiative would not be incumbent on the executive branch's advisers alone.

Finally, we hope that, apart from the bond between Change 90-New Majority and President Fujimori, the Constituent Congress will always have full autonomy and sovereignty. This alone, as well as total respect for the other state authorities, can guarantee the rapid and nontraumatic return to authentic democratic institutionality in Peru.

* Legislators Discuss Plans

93SM0091B Lima EL COMERCIO (Election Supplement) in Spanish 23 Nov 92 p A5

[Excerpts]

Lourdes Flores Nano

Constructive Opposition

To call together the political parties that received the most representative votes in these latest elections, so as to reach an understanding and engage in "constructive opposition": This was the first comment made by Lourdes Flores Nano, head of the PPC slate, when she learned that her political party had won second place in the elections for the CCD [Democratic Constituent Congress].

She emphasized: "I want to call openly upon my friends Fernando Olivera, Rafael Rey, Gloria Helfer, Roger Caceres and, in general, the political forces that received a sizable vote, so that, together, we can find the best way of creating a national plan, discarding the autocratic, personal plan that the government has attempted to impose." [passage omitted]

Rafael Rey Rey

Satisfactory Results

The six seats that the Renewal Movement reportedly attained in the CCD constitute "satisfactory results, although we expected a larger vote," according to Rafael Rey. He claimed that not having spent more time visiting the country's interior provinces had prevented him from reaching the voters, to inform them of the movement's proposals.

"It is in the provinces that we must seek more support, but Renewal is something long-term. It is a very first experience, and our participation does not end with the first Constituent Congress." According to Rey, one of the first acts in his term as a congress member will be to prepare the internal regulations that will govern the Legislative Branch.

He reiterated the fact that Renewal will not presume to exercise opposition, because its intention is to find common ideas among all movements, in order to select the best ones.

Early, after voting at the Alfonso Ugarte High School, he remarked that one of the principles that must govern the new Constitution will be "to ensure that the judicial branch is the preeminent authority of the state."

Fernando Olivera Vega

Respecting the People's Will

The leader of the Independent Front for Moralization, Fernando Olivera Vega, appeared gratified upon learning the first projections of results. He noted that the course of the electoral process was very troubled and filled with obstacles. Hence, the next few days will be critical for commanding respect for the people's will.

He expressed the view that the national support received by the FIM [Independent Front for Moralization] marks a new phase for that partisan group, because it is thereby encouraged to continue its effort to defend liberty and justice. "We received a very clear mandate to play an independent role, with genuine monitoring, and a battle against corruption and unethical conduct."

He did not preclude the possibility of forming partisan alliances for the purpose of carrying out projects of benefit to the country. He also claimed that the CCD's future depends largely on the open-minded attitude of New Majority-Change 90, and its leading candidate, Jaime Yoshiyama. [passage omitted]

Jose Barba Caballero

Balance Without a Majority

The leader of Democratic Coordination, Jose Barba Caballero, expressed his confidence yesterday that the government will not have a majority throughout the country, "and hence there will surely be a genuine balance of powers in this Democratic Constituent Congress."

He declared that the important part of this process is the transparency with which it is taking place all over the country; because Peru's reinstatement in the international realm and its reputation as a civilized nation depend on that.

Until noon, when he went to cast his vote at Polling Place 031324, at the National Library, accompanied by his wife, Estela de Barba, and smoking his usual cigar, the young politician voiced his confidence that the people will say yes to democracy and to the balance of powers.

Gloria Helfer Palacios

A New Party Was Born

"The vote attained by the Democratic Left Movement (about 5 percent on the national level) represents the birth of a new political party." This statement was made yesterday by Gloria Helfer, head of that party's slate, after she had heard the projections on the elections for the CCD.

She commented: "Despite meager financial resources and the fact that the MDI [Democratic Left Movement] was created only two months ago, it has emerged as a party of hope for a sector of the population. This is a time of foundation for us."

During the morning, Gloria Helfer remarked: "To emerge from the present political muddle, we must recognize the CCD's autonomy and maintain a respectful relationship with the other state authorities." The MDI's number one figure voted at the Santiago Apostol de Surco Educational Center.

Roger Caceres Velasquez

Concern Over Shortcomings

The leader of the National Front of Workers and Peasants, Roger Caceres Velasquez, expressed his concern over the "major shortcomings and the signs of uneasy suspense on the national level" that surrounded the CCD elections.

He declared: "I hope that the shortcomings in these elections will be overcome. Many people have been confused, and so there has been an enormous number of invalid votes. People have not understood the reason for this CCD."

When asked about the role played by the last Congress, which ended on 5 April, he claimed: "We were the 'just ones' in that crowd of 'sinners.' The price was paid with President Fujimori's self-created coup. Now, we are only waiting to prepare a new Constitution and to return to democracy."

With regard to Frenatraca's main proposals, he claimed that they will call for a legislative branch with members working full-time. They will also request an executive branch without the powers that the president of the republic had, and an independent, specialized judicial branch.

Manuel Moreyra Loredo

Coup Has Not Been Legitimized

The SODE [Solidarity and Democracy] will fight in the CCD on behalf of the full effectiveness of the Constitution of 1979, until the latter is amended, according to Manuel Moreyra Loredo. In statements made to EL COMERCIO, he claimed that the unofficial results of the voting prove that the people have not legitimized the coup of 5 April.

As for the action that the SODE will take in the CCD, he stressed that it will fight for the return to democracy, eliminating the obstacles besetting the country's sovereignty. He indicated that the SODE had participated in the electoral process realizing the risks. "The electoral process should have been honest, but it was not, because there were no equitable conditions." [passage omitted]

Uruguay

Foreign Minister Resigns, Two Ministers To Follow

PY1912183892 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1709 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] Montevideo, 19 Dec (EFE)—Uruguayan Foreign Minister Hector Gros Espiell has officially tendered his announced resignation, and two more ministers announced today they also will resign as members of President Luis Alberto Lacalle's cabinet in the next few days.

Gros Espiell will become Uruguayan ambassador in Paris, according to information disclosed by official sources, and will be replaced as foreign minister by current Senator Sergio Abreu. This information was disclosed to the media by Lacalle himself.

Livestock, Agriculture, and Fishing Minister Alvaro Ramos also confirmed to the media his decision to resign for "personal reasons."

Ramos noted that his decision to resign as minister has nothing to do with the setback suffered by the government on 13 December, when 78 percent of the citizenry voted in a referendum against the privatization of the state monopolies.

Ramos said he will leave the cabinet next January but he did not know who will replace him.

Housing, Land Improvement, and Environment Minister Jose Mieres Muro also announced his resignation. Political sources stated that the reason for his decision was "disputes" over contracts for the construction of housing complexes.

Lacalle has offered Mieres' post to Juan Chiruchi, current mayor of San Jose District, near Montevideo.

Lacalle told foreign journalists this week that the cabinet changes were supposed to be made before the referendum on the privatization law.

He added, however, that the changes were postponed due to the impetus gained by the campaigns in favor or against the privatization.

Lacalle did not disclose the number of ministers he is going to replace during the first week of January, but he did mention he is going to make changes in the ministries related to the economic area.

Minister Says Economic Policy To Be Maintained

PY1812210692 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0007 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] Montevideo, 17 Dec (EFE)—Uruguayan Economy Minister Ignacio de Posadas said today that there are no reasons for changing economic plans and the financial policy because they are beginning to yield positive results.

Thus, de Posadas refuted rumors to the effect that the administration is studying the possibility of changing its economic policy after receiving the message citizens conveyed by rejecting the privatization law in the 13 December referendum.

The minister addressed the National Chamber of Commerce to review the year that is about to end and stated that this year's inflation will stand at slightly more than 50 percent, while in 1991 it reached 81.4 percent and in 1990 it was 128.97 percent. The minister forecast that in 1993 inflation will be 30 percent.

De Posadas announced a "spectacular improvement" in port operations that has led to a 40 percent reduction in port rates after several services were privatized. These services were not covered by the privatization law that was annulled on 13 December.

He also explained that this year's unemployment rate stands at 8 percent, while in 1991 it was 9.6 percent.

The minister did not announce any salary increases for state servants. He did say, however, that people will begin to notice the economy's improvement in 1993. He added that the gross domestic product will have grown 6 percent by the end of this year and the fiscal deficit will amount to only 0.5 percent.

The head of the economic team conveyed the administration's message that "the prudent and sensible thing to do would be to follow the course that has yielded these positive results." This statement confirmed that the current liberal economic policy will be maintained.

De Posadas said that all economic indicators have been positive and pointed out that Uruguay imported $360 million worth of capital goods and $500 million worth of machinery and equipment. Uruguay averages $1.5 billion in exports per year and this average was maintained this year as well.

The minister's speech was intended to calm businessmen. He promised that the state will provide the necessary support for the retrofitting of private companies in view of the challenges posed by integration within the framework of the Common Market of the South.

The opposition severely pressured the Uruguayan administration this week after 72 percent of the citizenry voted against the antimonopoly and privatization law for public companies.

Even members of President Luis Alberto Lacalle's Blanco Party interpreted the defeat as a result of the economic policy that has hurt wage earners, pensioners, and especially public servants.

Government Not To Use Third Part of IMF Loan

PY1812150792 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 17 Dec 92

[Text] Our country will not use the funds available from the third installment of a standby [preceding word in English] loan granted by the IMF. Although the international credit organization approved the release of this installment, the government has deemed it unnecessary to use these funds. Therefore, the installment will not be used.

Sources linked to the government's economic team said the decision was made because there are no cash problems. Both the Economy Ministry and the Central Bank understand that, for the time being, it is not necessary to contract a debt.

Venezuela

Commission Restores Right To Demonstrate, Other Measures

PA1912170592 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 1605 GMT 19 Dec 92

[Text] The delegated Congressional Commission on 19 December approved the partial reinstatement of constitutional guarantees. The decision restores guarantees on the sanctity of one's home, the right to participate in demonstrations, the ban on keeping any person in jail after a release order has been issued, and the social interests measures regarding dangerous individuals. These measures can only be adopted by complying with

the formal conditions established by the law. The lawmakers deemed it necessary not to reinstate the guarantee that protects personal liberty and security contained in Article 70, Paragraphs 1 and 2, which bans arrests without a judicial order.

President Perez Praises Armed Forces

PA1912040892 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 2350 GMT 18 Dec 92

[Text] President Carlos Andres Perez reiterated on 18 December that the nation's armed forces have been essentially strengthened by the two foiled coup attempts in the country.

The president said this in Maracay when he presented his traditional Christmas and new year greetings to the Aragua and Guarico State Garrisons. The president returned to the soldiers of the 42d Paratrooper Brigade a symbol that had always distinguished them: their red berets.

President Perez said that nothing has stained the armed forces and that our country is and will always be democratic. It will be governed by whomever is elected by the people, as the 6 December elections demonstrated.

These paratroopers' red berets were changed for green berets as a result of the 4 February military insurrection. On 18 December, the president returned their symbol to them, considering that these soldiers were not responsible for what happened.

[Begin Perez recording] I am going to restore, through the general who commands this division, one of the symbols of the paratrooper brigade—the red berets—so that the soldiers of the Venezuelan Army paratrooper brigade may wear them. This brigade is not responsible for having been, at any given moment, the center of the insurrection. [end recording]

Following his greetings to the Maracay Garrison, the president dedicated the El Lago Housing Project in southern Maracay. This housing project was built with resources from the National Housing Institute as a result of the Housing Policy Law. The project has 21 buildings, each of which has 32 apartments and an area of 42 square meters.

Each apartment represents an investment of 493,000 bolivares. The beneficiaries will make a 10 percent down payment. The interest rate for the 25 years of credit is 6 percent.

President Perez was accompanied by Governor Carlos Tablante, National Housing Institute President Jose Rafael Velasquez, and other officials. All toured the housing project.

The National Housing Institute, jointly with the private sector, on 18 December dedicated the Los Tanques housing project in Villa de Cura. This project consists of 532 country-style houses. The project was completed in the framework of the Housing Policy Law.

Minister Denies Colombian Guerillas Crossing Border

PA1812155992 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 2350 GMT 17 Dec 92

[Report by Johnny Ficarella]

[Text] General Ivan Dario Jimenez Sanchez, the Venezuelan defense minister, has denied reports that Colombian guerrillas are infiltrating Venezuelan territory.

The defense minister made the statement when leaving the National Cemetery after the ceremony commemorating the death of liberator Simon Bolivar. Gen. Ivan Dario Jimenez Sanchez added that the statement made by Colombian President Cesar Gaviria, who said his country's guerrillas are operating in Venezuela, makes no sense because no guerrillas have crossed our borders.

[Begin Jimenez recording] We have reinforced our border posts with ground forces, National Guard units, and up to now, we have not had any information about guerrillas infiltrating our territory. [end recording]

At any rate, the possibility that Colombian guerrillas may be crossing the border into our territory has not been completely ruled out. The armed forces will remain alert.